SAINTS OF THE ROSARY

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Saints of the Rosary

BEING

Lives of Some of the Saints

OF THE

Order of Friar Preachers

BY

THOMAS AUSTIN DYSON

PRIEST OF THE SAME ORDER

AUTHOR OF

'THE LIFE OF ST. THOMAS AQUINAS," "LIVES OF SOME OF THE SONS OF ST. DOMINIC," "THE LIFE OF ST. PIUS V.," "STARS IN ST. DOMINIC'S CROWN," AND "WITHIN THE GOLDEN GATES."

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APPROBATIONS.

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Fr. Andreas Fruhwirth,
Master General.

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SAINT ANTONINUS.

SAINT ANTONINUS.

May 10th.

1390–1457

ST. ANTONINUS, one of the most illustrious of the sons of St. Dominic, was born in Florence, March 1st, 1360. His father, Nicholas Pierozzi, and Thomasia Nucci, his mother, were both of noble birth. He was their only son, and was baptized Antony, which name he always used, and which is given him by nearly all his earliest historians, and by Pope Adrian VI. in the Buli of his canonization. He is however always called Antoninus, or little Antony, on account of his diminutive stature.

His pious parents brought him up in the fear of God; an easy task, seeing he was of such a good and pious disposition. Among other means of instilling piety into his mind they accustomed him to make a daily visit to

the Altar of the Blessed Virgin. He was very devout to her, and prayed to God almost continually. He conceived in his heart a great love for the beautiful virtue of chastity, and one day entering the church of Orsanmichele on his way to school, he made a vow of chastity at the foot of a crucifix in the chapel of the Blessed Virgin Mary. He kept his vow intact until death. This crucifix, which spoke to him to encourage him in his holy resolution, is the object of popular veneration, and bears an inscription which records his vow and the miraculous approbation of heaven. He advanced rapidly in his studies, and gave great promise of a brilliant future. God called him to devote his talents to the service of the Church in the Order of St. Dominic. Blessed John Dominic was preaching in Florence, and attracted the holy youth to the Order by his eloquence and piety. Antoninus confided his desire to him, and asked to be received as a novice in the monastery which he was building at Fiesole, two miles from Florence, for a community strict of observance. Seeing the small stature and frail appearance of the holy youth, Blessed John Dominic thought he

would not be able to undergo the rigors of the Dominican rule. He asked him what studies he had made, to which the boy answered that he had studied Canon Law. "Very well," replied Blessed John Dominic, "I will receive you into the Order when you have learned your Canon Law by heart." Antoninus was neither astonished nor discouraged by this answer, and returning home continued his studies. In less than a year he went back to Blessed John Dominic; he had fulfilled the condition; he knew the decrees of Gratian by heart, and claimed the habit as his reward. Utterly surprised at the perseverance and application of one so young, and recognizing what a great mind and soul dwelt in so small a body, Blessed John Dominic joyfully received him into the Order, and gave him the habit, August 14th, 1405, in the newly consecrated church of the Monastery of Fiesole. The truth of this fact was sworn to during the process of his canonization. He was then in his seventeenth year.

He made his noviciate in the monastery at Cortona, unnecessary to add with fervor and regularity. His Novice-Master was Blessed

Laurence of Ripafratta, and among his companions in the Noviciate were Blessed Peter Capucci of Citta-di-Castello, and Fra Angelico. At the end of the year he made the sacrifice of himself required by the three vows of holy religion, and returned to Fiesole, where after passing through the usual course of studies he was ordained priest. Tears flowed from his eyes when he said holy Mass. His life was very austere; in sickness as in health he always slept on a bare board; he seemed to have brought his body into perfect subjection, and lived as if he were a soul freed from its earthly tenement. He always wore a hair shirt underneath his clothing and took a severe discipline every night before retiring to rest. His union with God in prayer was so intimate that he was several times seen raised from the ground in ecstatic rapture.

His first miracle was caused by a very simple incident. Going with a companion from Fiesole to Florence, they came across a little girl standing on the roadside and shedding bitter tears. She had been sent by her mother to draw water and had let the pitcher fall, which was broken in pieces. They spoke

to the child to console her, but her tears fell in torrents, and her grief defied their kind and charitable efforts. Touched to the heart by her distress, Antoninus took the pieces from the ground, and making the sign of the cross over them, gave back the pitcher to the child as whole as if it had never been broken.

His spiritual father and friend, Blessed John Dominic, having become Cardinal, was required by Pope Gregory XII. to reside near his person, and the work of reform he had instituted in the Order fell on the shoulders of St. Antoninus. He was elected Prior of several monasteries; of the Minerva in Rome, of Fiesole, Cortona, Gaeta, Florence, Siena, Sessa, Pistoia and Naples. In all these monasteries he maintained the strict observance of the Rule, by exhortation and by perfect example. He was also Vicar-General of the Dominican Congregation of Tuscany, formed of various reformed monasteries of the Roman and Neapolitan provinces; and Auditor of the Rota, in which capacity he introduced many necessary reforms into the Papal Palace, more especially with regard to salaries of Apostolic Notaries. In the exercise of the important

duties these offices required of him, he preserved his humility, and was just as willing to assist in any lowly duty in the monastery, as in the days when he was a novice. He said Mass and served another every day, preached often with signal success, was assiduous in hearing confessions, and had many penitents. He obtained so great a reputation for wisdom and sound judgment, that he was continually consulted by canonists and theologians in difficult ecclesiastical cases. His decision always proved sound, and was invariably acted upon. He was called by Eugenius IV. to take part in the Council of Florence, and was privileged to be present at the reunion of the Eastern and Western Churches.

Cosmo de Medici gave him the church of San Marco in Florence, and built a spacious monastery for the community which he established there. Antoninus was its first Prior. This monastery became famous throughout Christendom for the holiness and the learning of its inmates, not the least of whom was the famous Savonarola. The walls of the church and the cells of the monastery were soon covered with frescoes by Fra Angelico and Fra

Benedetto, and the choir books were decorated with exquisite illuminated miniatures. Cosmo de Medici also gave a magnificent library of four hundred rare volumes to the Fathers. At the present day this monastery, so dear to every son of St. Dominic, is a public museum, the usurping government having robbed the Dominicans of San Marco of nearly all their property.

During his residence at San Marco, he was enabled by God to work several miracles. A Florentine nobleman, having lost his only son by death, went to receive consolation from the holy Prior. After praying together for some moments, the Saint told him to return to his house, where he would find his son alive and in perfect health, as proved to be the case. One day he took the novices out for a walk as far as Baroncelli, and while they were conversing with the Rector, a pious and learned priest, a storm arose which threatened to last a long time. When the hour came for them to take their departure, Father Antoninus, turning to where the storm was most severe, knelt down and made the sign of the cross, when all at once the rain ceased and they were able to

return to Florence in perfect safety, leaving the priest stupefied with wonder and admiration.

When he was Prior of the Monastery of St. Peter Martyr at Naples, he also worked several miracles. Water having failed he ordered the Brothers to dig in a corner of the enclosure, assuring them that they would obtain an abundant supply. St. Antoninus' well, as it is called, soon became famous, and as it never ran dry, the whole city drew water from it on several occasions when there was a drought. Asked once for a loan of oil and honey he found that there was none in the monastery. He requested two Tertiaries to give him some that he might give it away. They too were without any. "Go," said he to them, "take some of what remains. You have an abundance." God had miraculously multiplied their stores, and when they reached home they found that, after supplying all he asked, they had sufficient for their own needs.

The exile and ruin of many rich and influential families in Florence caused great poverty among the people. In February, 1441, St. Antoninus called together twelve prominent

citizens, and unfolded to them a plan by which the sufferings of the poor could be relieved. He formed these gentlemen into a society, under the protection of St. Martin, and gave them a rule and statutes. The members were to devote their spare time and all they could give, to the relief of the poor, especially of those whose pride forbade them to beg. The city was divided into sections, and two Procurators appointed to each, with power to add six Aids to their labors. Every month a meeting of the officers and members was held, and a Prefect of the whole society elected for that month. The poor were to make known their needs, either in person or by letter, and the Procurators and their Aids were to distribute to all according to their needs. It was absolutely forbidden to use any of the money collected except for the benefit of the poor, and the society was to remain independent of any external control, ecclesiastical or civil. Great enthusiasm was excited by this noble plan, and having effected its purpose at the time of institution, it has lasted until this day.

When Cardinal Zabarella, Archbishop of Florence, died, St. Antoninus succeeded him

in that See in spite of his desire to escape such a high office and so heavy a responsibility. Nine months had elapsed in fruitless endeavors to obtain a successor to the late Archbishop, when the Florentines requested the Pope to give them a native of Florence to rule over the Church in that city. One day the Pope was conversing with Fra Angelico, and confided to him that the nomination of the Archbishop of Florence caused him much anxiety. "The Florentines," said the Pope, "request an Archbishop who is to be learned, virtuous, of business habits, and moreover a citizen of Florence. I cannot think of any one possessing all those qualifications." "Your Holiness," answered the Dominican artist, "will find them in one man only. He is Father Antoninus, Vicar General of the Dominican province of Naples." It was as if scales had fallen from the Pope's eyes. He knew St. Antoninus, but had not thought of him. His mind was made up at once, and Father Antoninus was appointed Archbishop of Florence. He had been absent from that city making a visitation of the communities under his charge, and was at Siena on his way homeward when

he was told that the Pope had made him Archbishop of his native city. He was thunderstruck; his humility was alarmed, and he determined to flee to the island of Sardinia, where he hoped to remain hidden until another had been appointed in his stead. But his nephew, who had come to visit him in the hope of being the first to tell him of what he thought his uncle would have regarded as the good news of his promotion, did all he could to persuade him to accept the dignity, and did not leave him for fear he would embark for Sardinia. He influenced the Dominican Lay Brother who was the Saint's companion, and both determined to hinder him from leaving Siena. St. Antoninus wrote to the Pope, beseeching him not to impose so heavy a burden on his feeble shoulders. He pleaded his age, fifty-seven, the frequent maladies which afflicted him, and his incapacity for so high an office. The Pope was inflexible, and ordered him to go at once to Fiesole. He obeyed, with the hope that some of his influential friends would induce the Pope to relent. But in this he was mistaken. Florence was in delight at the news of his appointment, and as

soon as he arrived in Fiesole the whole city went out to welcome him. The principal clergy, and the Senate with Cosmo di Medici at its head, went to show him honor, and to declare their satisfaction at the Pope's choice. St. Antoninus still held out, and it was not until he was threatened with excommunication that he could be induced to give his consent. "God is my witness," he said, "God who searches the heart and the reins, that I never desired such an office, and that my will gave way only before the will of God, and the commands of His Church." He was consecrated, and made a solemn entry into the city, according to the custom of the times, March 13, 1446. He walked in the procession, his heart filled with sorrow in spite of the joyful cries of the people, who crowded around him and fell on their knees to kiss his hand, and obtain his blessing. All regarded him as an angel from heaven.

He proved to be a model Christian Bishop, worthy to be ranked with the most illustrious prelates the Church has ever seen. He made no change in his mode of life, and continued to observe the rules of his Order in all things,

as faithfully as before. His dress, table, bedroom, and the furniture of his archiepiscopal palace preached evangelical poverty. He had only six domestic servants, to whom he paid high wages, to hinder them from receiving bribes from those who had any business with him. He made a personal and minute examination into all cases brought before the episcopal court, and took care that justice should always be rendered, never leaving such affairs to the care of paid officials.

He preached every Sunday and on feast days, and when he preached it is said that one sinner at least was converted at every sermon. Before preaching he spent a long time in prayer, and his sanctity spoke to the hearts of his hearers as eloquently as his words. He soon had the satisfaction of knowing that grave abuses were destroyed, and of seeing a general reformation of morals among his people. Many of his sermons took the form of familiar instructions, and he very frequently explained the catechism. He held diocesan synods regularly, and made a searching visitation in every parish once a year. In these visitations he was accompanied by a Domini-

can Father and several secular clergy. Many miracles took place during these journeys, but, as Touron says, his greatest miracle was the conversion of priests whose lives had been unworthy of their holy vocation. Kindness was his weapon; but if a second reprimand became necessary he was very severe, and punished with great rigor. In the commencement of his episcopate he said the divine office with the priests and clerics of his household in private, but when he learned that in the Cathedral it was not chanted with due decorum, he assisted at it publicly, so that his presence might remedy the disorder; although doing so took up much of his time.

He reformed many long-standing abuses, such as usury and the practice of magic; forbade gambling, and when he was told that it was still practised, went to the haunts of the gamblers, and carried away the dice. An evil custom of meeting in churches to arrange business had gradually been introduced; he completely abolished it. He feared not to oppose the city magistrates when they infringed on the rights of the Church. One of them became so infuriated during an inter-

view that he threatened to throw him headlong out of the window, and to expel him from the bishopric. He answered that the grace of giving his life in defence of the faith and of the rights of the Church was more than he deserved, that it was his most ardent desire to be free from the care of governing a diocese, and that he had kept the key of his little cell in the Monastery of San Marco with the hope of occupying it again some day.

Regarding the revenues of his diocese as the property of the poor, the Saint divided them into three parts: the smallest part was for his own expenses; another for the repairs of the archiepiscopal palace, which was falling into ruins; and the third and by far the largest for the poor; and when the palace had been put into complete repair nearly the whole of his revenue became theirs. He gave alms every day at his own door in such abundance that sometimes not a cent remained in his purse. He sold furniture, books and clothes to obtain money for his beloved poor. He strictly forbade his servants to send them away without relief, and was not ashamed to beg for them when all other resources failed.

He reduced the expenses of his household as much as possible; he had no silver plate, nor anything of value in his palace; horses and dogs were dispensed with, and he kept only one mule to serve for the urgent needs of his establishment, and sold even that when he ran short of money. A gentleman bought it and at once returned it to him. Another gentleman noticed his miserable furniture, and sent him a magnificent bed-spread. Some days after he saw his present exposed for sale in a store, and divining that the Archbishop had sold it for the benefit of the poor, purchased it a second time and returned it to him. This took place three times, and when he told his acquaintances what Antoninus had done they sent him money and jewels in abundance. During the varied occupations of his episcopal duties he never lost the interior peace of his soul or his serenity of mind; because, as he confided to Francis de Cantillon, Canon of the Cathedral, he formed a little oratory in his heart to which he frequently retired for recollection of spirit.

One day a man asked him to dower his daughter that she might contract an honor-

able marriage. He came just as the holy Archbishop had exhausted his charitable funds. "Go to the church of the Annunciata," he said to him, "and beg assistance from the virginal Mother of God." As the man was entering the church, he overheard two beggars conversing. "I have two hundred crowns hidden in my hat," said one. "I have yet more," said the other, "I have three hundred in my vest." Returning to the Archbishop he told him what he had heard, who sent for them, and severely reproached them for begging when not in want, and hindering those who were really in need from receiving alms. Taking the money from them, he gave sufficient for their immediate needs, and charged himself to support them for the future.

Walking once through the street of Saint Ambrose he saw angels over a house chanting songs of joy. Inquiring who dwelt there he found it was the residence of a pious widow supported by three virtuous daughters who worked day and night to make a living. He took compassion on them and gave them an income, so that they would not be obliged to work so hard, on feast days especially, as they

had hitherto been obliged to do. He passed down the street some time afterwards, and this time saw a devil over the house. The young girls' piety had vanished with their poverty, and they had neglected the worship of God more than when they had been so poor and needy. He told them what he had seen, and reduced the income he had given them, for fear that idleness might lead them to total forgetfulness of God.

Like the Good Shepherd he was willing to give his life for his people. A plague broke out in Florence, and all who could, fled from the city to escape the contagion. The holy Archbishop remained at his post in the midst of the danger, visiting the sick, hearing the confessions of the dying, and administering the last Sacraments. He sent all the Dominican Fathers of San Marco to attend the plague-stricken in the country places, and when nearly all of them had died, victims of the plague and martyrs of charity, he obtained other Dominicans from Santa Maria Novella, and Fiesole, and when they too had died he wrote to the Master-General of the Order to obtain others to take their place. Famine

succeeded the plague. But again he was equal to the occasion, and after expending his whole income and the revenues of the city magistrates, he obtained alms from several Cardinals and Pope Nicholas V. The rich of Florence followed his noble example, until at last he had the satisfaction of seeing the famine come to an end.

Pope Eugenius IV. had intended raising him to the Cardinalate, but died before he could carry out his intention. When he knew that his end was near, he sent for him, and having confessed to him, received the last Sacraments from his hands. The Conclave for the election of his successor was held in the Dominican Monastery of the Minerva in Rome, and five votes were cast for St. Antoninus, who acted as Secretary and Scrutator at the election.

His charity for souls and his zeal for the honor of God caused him to write many learned and highly useful works; among which are a "Summa" of moral theology, a chronicle or historical Summa from the beginning of the world until the year 1458; a little Summa of moral theology for the use of priests;

treatises on the virtues and vices, the precepts, etc., sermons and other religious works. In addition to these, all of which have been published many times in Italy, France and Germany, several other works from his pen are preserved in manuscript in the Florentine libraries.

He worked many miracles, all for the good of his fellow-creatures. He cured the sick and dying, restored life to the dead, and many times increased bread and oil. One New Year's Day a man made him a present of a basket of fruit, expecting to receive something in return. But to his disappointment the Archbishop only said, "May God reward you." St. Antoninus noticed the man's chagrin, and taking the fruit put it on one side of a weigh scale, and on the other a piece of paper on which he had written the words he had said, "May God reward you"; when, behold! the paper weighed down the fruit. On another occasion he was asked to pronounce ecclesiastical excommunication against one who would not pay his debts. He declined, and when he was told that it had often been done on similar occasions he said, "Bring me

some bread." Then to show the fearful effects of such a sentence, and to teach a lesson of mercy, he pronounced the sentence of excommunication over it, when it immediately became as black as coal.

The Saint's firmness in abolishing abuses drew upon him the hatred of those he felt bound to punish; and one whom he had cited to appear before the ecclesiastical court determined to assassinate him. Armed with a poignard he entered the Archbishop's private apartment, and without a word struck at him as he sat in his chair. Fortunately he was able to avoid the blow. The guilty man escaped, and Antoninus forbade that he should be pursued, hoping that he would repent, and most earnestly prayed for him. His prayers were answered, the would-be-murderer repented of his crime, and after confessing it, entered the Franciscan Order, in which he died. Nothing could equal his boldness when he had occasion to defend the rights of the people against tyranny, or the privileges of the Church when they were threatened. Francis of Padua, Treasurer of Eugenius IV., was arrested by the Florentine Senate. St. Antoni-

nus at once demanded his release, and when it was refused, placed the Cathedral under interdict, and pronounced the canonical penalties against the Senate. At another time he inflicted a public penance on the city magistrates for having imprisoned two priests in defiance of Canon Law.

Pope Nicolas V. ordered that no appeal should be received in Rome against his decisions in ecclesiastical matters. The same Pope had so high an opinion of him that he said, "I believe that the Archbishop of Florence, although yet alive, should be added to the catalogue of the Saints." He was sent as ambassador from Florence to the Court of Rome, and was requested to go in the same capacity to the Emperor Frederick III., but excused himself on account of age.

His elevation to the Episcopate did not lessen his love for his Order, and he never forgot that he was a Dominican. The Novice Master having expressed his regret to him that so few novices offered themselves to take the place of so many Fathers who had died in the exercise of the sacred ministry during the plague he bade him not to fear. In a very

short time ten most excellent young men applied to be received, and their example was quickly followed by others, so that in a few years the Fathers were as many as before.

He departed this life at the age of seventy, on the 2nd of May, 1459, the Eve of the Ascension. He had been a Bishop thirteen years. He died repeating the words so often on his lips, "To serve God is to reign"; and the Responsary of the Dominican Office of the Blessed Virgin, "Sancta et immaculata virginitas—" etc. "O holy and immaculate virginity, I know not with what praises to extol thee; for thou gavest Him from thy bosom whom the heavens cannot contain."

A holy Cistercian, Blessed Tucci of Florence, and Blessed Constantius of Fabriano of the Dominican Order, saw his holy soul rise to heaven in a cloud of light. Pope Pius II., being in Florence, honored his funeral with his presence. The whole city was in mourning, and the poor in tears. The holy body was carried on the shoulders of six priests with great solemnity from the archiepiscopal palace to the Dominican Church of San Marco, where he had desired to be buried with the Brothers

of his Order. The Pope published an indulgence of seven years for all who kissed the feet of the Saint's body, and during the eight days on which it remained in the church, crowds went to gain the indulgence. Many miracles were wrought, principally by touching his habit and leathern belt. The celebrated Dominican Cardinal Turrecremata lighted a lamp before the saint's body to show his veneration for him.

His relics were solemnly translated in 1589 to a chapel magnificently decorated at the expense of the Salviati family, on which occasion it was found incorrupt. He was canonized by Adrian VI., 1523, but the Bull was published by his successor, Clement VII.

St. Antoninus is represented in ecclesiastical art holding his archiepiscopal cross in his left hand, and weigh scales in his right, with a basket of fruit on one side and on the other a scroll, on which are written his words: "May God reward you." Sometimes several volumes are placed near him, and frequently he carries the lily of virginity in his hand.

Pope Clement VII. ordered Father Vincent Mainard, of San Germiniano, Procurator Gen-

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eral of the Dominican Order, to write his life. In our own days petitions have been sent to the Holy See to ask that the title of Doctor of the Church should be conferred upon him.

BLESSED JOANNA OF PORTUGAL.

BLESSED JOANNA OF PORTUGAL.

May 12.

1452–1490.

THIS holy Princess was remarkable for her heroic perseverance in following her religious vocation. The daughter of a King, separated only by the life of a younger and sickly brother from the throne, every argument that human wisdom could suggest was urged against her entering a convent; yet she never wavered; and after overcoming every difficulty, died in the holy habit she had so long desired and loved so much.

She was the child of prayer. Her father, Alphonsus V., King of Portugal, grieved that he had no heir to succeed him, made a pilgrimage to a church dedicated to St. Dominic in the diocese of Lamego, to obtain a child through the intercession of that Saint. In due time,

February 16th, 1452, Queen Elizabeth, his wife, gave birth to a daughter, who was called Joanna in honor of St. John the Evangelist, to whom the Queen had a special devotion. A son was also granted to the royal couple three years later, who received the name of John.

Queen Elizabeth died when Joanna was four years old, and the education of the young Princess was confided to the care of a noble and pious lady, Beatrice de Menezes, whose only thought was to instill piety into the mind of her charge and to ground her in virtue and holiness. It was not a difficult task, for Joanna showed very remarkable signs of sanctity as soon as she came to the use of reason. She said the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin every day, and dearly loved to read the lives of the Saints, especially those of her own sex. Her extraordinary recollection excited universal admiration.

When she was twelve years old her hand was sought in marriage for his brother by Louis XI. of France, but she had already dedicated her life to God, and had resolved never to marry. She had an earnest desire to practice penance, but how could she do so in a

palace? She confided her desires to a gentleman and two ladies of the court, who gave her a hair shirt and some coarse garments to wear under her royal robes. She began to withdraw as much as possible from the court ceremonies and festivities. When her attendants had retired to rest she often arose to spend the night in prayer. She fasted on bread and water every Friday and many other days, and frequently took the discipline. She was accustomed on the Feast of the Circumcision to discipline herself to blood in honor of the first drops of blood shed for our redemption by the infant Jesus. She meditated often on the Passion of Christ, and in Holy Week took no rest whatever; on Holy Thursday she piously washed the feet of twelve poor women, but veiled her face and wore poor clothes for fear she should be recognized, and after the ceremony caused a large alms to be given to each one. She sent twenty persons to distribute her charities to religious houses, prisoners, the sick in hospitals, widows and orphans. On many occasions she acted as peace-maker, and when the King offended his nobles, as happened several times, she always succeeded in

restoring concord. Every one loved and respected the young Princess, so pious and wise beyond her years.

The fame of her exceeding beauty was European, and artists from every part arrived in Lisbon to paint her portrait. Louis XI. of France obtained one of these pictures and was so impressed by her loveliness that he fell on his knees to thank God for having created so beautiful a creature. When she was sixteen, the Portuguese nobles expressed their wish that she should marry to secure the succession to the throne; but she was terrified at the thought of marriage—for she had dedicated her virginity to God and it had always been her ardent desire to enter holy religion, but she had been afraid to acquaint her father with her wish, and had prayed night and day to be enabled to follow her vocation.

Doña Eleonora de Menezes, a young lady of noble family, also desired to enter a convent, and had confided her intention to the Princess Joanna, who requested her to make diligent inquiries into the state of all the convents in the kingdom, and to find out in which one the most perfect religious discipline

flourished. Doña Eleonora informed her that monastic observance was most perfectly observed in the newly-founded Convent of the Dominican Sisters of the Second Order at Aveiro. The young lady entered the convent afterwards and wrote to the Princess, telling her that the sanctity and charity of the Sisters was far beyond even what she had been led to expect. This excited Joanna's desire all the more to abandon the world, and acting as if all had been arranged, she dismissed the ladies who attended her and distributed her jewels among them. Then she made a formal request to her father, the King, for permission to enter a convent. He dearly loved his daughter and was filled with grief at the thought of losing her; her brother, the young Prince, was dismayed, and all the nobles warmly opposed her intention: and in fine, every one declared it was her duty to remain in the court for the good of the kingdom. She obeyed, trusting that God would make a way for her to follow her vocation.

Soon afterwards King Alphonsus resolved to sail to Africa to fight against the Moors and to take his son with him, and appointed the

Princess Joanna, who was only nineteen years of age, Regent of the kingdom during his absence. On his return she met him in state, clothed in regal garments, and in the name of Portugal congratulated him on his brilliant victories, and seized the occasion to ask permission to enter a convent, where she promised to offer unceasing prayers for the good of religion and the welfare of the kingdom. Her words were so touching and her desire so earnest that the King gave his promise. At the end of two months passed in public rejoicings, she reminded him of his promise, and after many protests he again acceded to her desires. She left the court immediately, and after spending some time with the Bernadine Sisters at Odivellas, arrived at the Dominican Convent at Aveiro on the eve of the Feast of St. Dominic, August 3rd, 1472. The King donated the whole city of Aveiro and large estates to the convent as a dowry for his daughter.

The opposition of the Portuguese nobles to this step was so great that three years elapsed before she could receive the habit, during which time she kept the Rule, attended all the

community exercises, and practised the fasts and austerities of the Order as far as her delicate health allowed. At length she was allowed to receive the habit, January 25th, 1476, being then twenty-four years of age. As soon as her reception was published nearly every city of Portugal sent a deputation to the convent to protest that if she made her profession it would be held to be null and void, as she would be the heir to the throne if her brother should die without child.* Pressure was even brought upon the King to induce him to take her from the convent by force ; and her brother, Don John, and the Bishop of Evora were sent to attempt to persuade her to take off the habit. She told them that it was not without serious reflection and many prayers that she had left the world to enter religion, and that nothing could persuade her to abandon the convent and return again to the court. Her words gained the Bishop to her side, but the young Prince was so enraged that he threatened to use force and drag her from her religious home.

She continued her noviciate with great fervor, and constantly refused any mitigation

of the Rule offered her on account of her rank. She took part in all the duties of the novices, washed the linen, scrubbed floors, and waited on the sick. She learned to spin and became proficient in needlework, but above all she delighted to make hair shirts and disciplines. She excelled in comforting the troubled in mind, and by her prayers always obtained peace for them. Having been told that there were some Moorish slaves in Aveiro, she caused them to be instructed in Christian doctrine, which led to their conversion.

The pious Princess awaited with holy eagerness the day on which she could bind herself to God by the vows of religion, but as the time drew near many obstacles arose. Remonstrances were sent from all parts of Portugal, and to make matters worse, when she fell sick, physicians declared that her sickness was the effect of observing the austerities of the Rule, and that if she was not desirous of death she must at once leave the Order. The King sent her a command to take off the habit, but before obeying she consulted the Vicar-General of the Dominican Order in Portugal, whose opinion was that it was not God's will that she should

continue in religion. She gave way, but declared that although she followed his advice she would always regret it, and that her love for the Order would last until death. Shedding bitter tears, she took off the habit and laid it on the altar as a gift to God. Sometime afterwards, however, she again took the habit, declaring that never again would she give it up.

She was left in peace until 1479, when the plague having broken out in Aveiro, the King ordered her to leave the town until it had abated, and sent two Bishops to conduct her wherever she desired to go. She told them that wherever she went she must be allowed to live as a religious and to observe her Rule just the same as if she was in the convent. Accompanied by the Mother Prioress and five Sisters she traveled to the court. About this time King Alphonsus died and her brother, who succeeded to the throne, more than ever pressed her to marry; for Louis XI. of France and Richard III. of England both demanded her hand. She refused these offers, remained deaf to her brother's requests, and as soon as she could returned to her convent,

where she made her vows on the Feast of St. Catharine of Siena. From that time until her death she was left free to follow her holy vocation.

Strange as it may seem, her death was by poison. Soon after her first arrival in Aveiro she was told of the scandal caused in the city by a lady who openly led an immoral life. Charity led the holy Princess to make an attempt to change the heart of the miserable woman, and when she was obliged to abandon all hope, she insisted on her leaving the city. As the Princess was journeying back to Aveiro after the plague had ceased, she happened to stay in the place where this woman had taken up her abode. Her heart was filled with hatred towards the holy Sister, and she contrived to mix some poison with the food prepared for her. It did not kill her at once; but from that day her health was irretrievably ruined, and the end was only a matter of time. After great sufferings, borne with wonderful patience, she died, May 12th, 1490, at the age of thirty-eight. Her funeral was accompanied by all the ceremony her exalted birth and virtues deserved. It is recorded that when her body was carried

past a garden, in which she had often walked, the trees and flowers immediately withered.

Her glory in heaven was revealed to several holy persons, among whom was the Prioress of her convent, who grieved much for her loss. Joanna appeared to her in glory, clothed in the habit of the Order, and said, "Why do you afflict yourself in this way, dear mother? Tell the Sisters that I am in the abode of rest. In a short time you will know why God has taken me from the world." Fourteen months afterwards her brother the King died without heir, so that if she had lived she would have succeeded to the throne, and would have been forced from the convent.

God manifested the glory of his faithful servant by many miracles in every part of the world. The Feast of the Blessed Joanna was granted to Portugal and the Dominican Order by Innocent XII.; efforts are now being made to procure her canonization.

BLESSED COLUMBA OF RIETI.

BLESSED COLUMBA OF RIETI.

RELIGIOUS OF THE THIRD ORDER.

May 20.

1467–1501.

In a small valley between Rome and Ancona, in whose bosom the river Vellino spreads out into a series of picturesque lakes, stands Rieti, the birthplace of Blessed Columba.

She was the child of Angelo Guadognoli, by Joanna, his second wife. At the moment of her entrance into this world, (1467,) angels surrounded the house in which she was born, and celestial harmonies floated in the air. Her parents decided to call her Angellela, or Little Angel, but when she was taken to the font a white dove flew into the church, and hovering over the font, alighted on the child's head; on account of which the people always called her Columba, or Dove.

Her parents, who seemed to have no other aim in life than to do good, were so charitable to the poor that when their own means were exhausted they were not ashamed to beg for them. Her mother said to her one day, "Columba, my child, we shall have to fast to-day; there is no food in the house and I have no money." She expressed her willingness, but, however, made known their needs to God in prayer, and even while she prayed there came to the house the servants of some pious ladies who had sent an alms to be given to the poor, and very soon after some money due to her parents was paid quite unexpectedly.

Much of her piety may be traced to the good example and holy teaching she received from her parents. Her mother taught her to do household work, and for several years she cooked, spun, and sewed. As an act of devotion she and her mother offered to repair the habits and clothing of the Dominican Fathers and Novices of Rieti. Many were the signs of sanctity observed in her youth. At three years old she strewed her little bed with thorns and rough pieces of wood. She next commenced to fast on bread and water every

Friday. She went barefooted and could not be persuaded to wear linen underclothing; she tied a knotted cord around her waist and often took the discipline. As soon as she knew the Hail Mary she put herself under the especial protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary. When the Dominican Sisters of Rieti taught her to read, she began to recite the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary every day; and when they gave her the life of St. Catharine of Siena to read, it was in imitation of that great servant of God that she adopted so many kinds of penance.

Her parents having fallen into indigence, Columba was obliged to support herself by work. When she was twelve years old she had a vision which determined her future life. One night she was praying in her room when the Son of God appeared to her in majesty on a golden throne, and with him St. Peter, St. Jerome, and St. Dominic. The humble child fell at the feet of the Saviour of the world and begged Him to bless her; and then under divine inspiration made a vow of perpetual virginity while she took Him as the only spouse of her soul. Her fidelity was soon

tried. A rich young man asked her for wife; her parents gladly consented, fixed the wedding-day, agreed on the settlements, but said nothing to her about it. On the night previous to that on which the marriage contract was to be signed, Columba saw in a vision two Dominican Fathers, who told her to go to the church of Saint Maron, where she would find a nun who would instruct her in what they desired her to do. She obeyed and found the nun, who said to her: "This evening your parents intend to give you away in marriage. Do not consent to accept any spouse except Jesus Christ. Cut off your hair and offer it to the young man who desires you for his wife." In the evening the young man accompanied by his friends arrived at the house and Columba was introduced to him. She said at once, "You come to ask my consent. Wait a moment," and going into another room cut off her hair. When she returned she held it in her hands and said to him, "Take this sign of the world's vanity, and learn in what esteem I hold it. I am promised to another spouse, and am sincerely grieved that you have asked me in marriage." He went away and not

long afterwards died. After this her father allowed her to follow the bent of her piety, and gave her a quiet room where she could spend her time in prayer. Her mother was not so well satisfied, but Columba's obedience and application to work finally overcame her discontent. Her uncle persistently opposed her piety, and her eldest brother would once have taken her life had not the holy angels of God defended her against his fury. The devil maliciously attacked her whenever she prayed, but always fled before her patience and invincible trust in God.

One of her penances was to keep a long fast five times a year: from All Saints to Christmas, from Septuagesima to Easter Sunday, from the Rogation days until Pentecost, from Trinity Sunday to the Octave Day of Corpus Christi, and from the Feast of St. Dominic to the Assumption. At first she fasted on bread and water, but afterwards ate only a little fruit or herbs. Her food was the holy bread of angels; she made a spiritual communion every day and received the Body and Blood of her Saviour on the first Sunday of the month and all great feasts. Many

times angelic hands administered Holy Communion to her. She had a great desire to see the holy land and visit the places which had been sanctified by the feet of Christ; and one day prayed to Him to grant her that grace. She then fell into ecstasy and remained in that state for five days, during which she was led in spirit to the scenes of his bitter passion and cruel death. She had also a particular devotion to the holy infancy, and once asked her confessor, who had great talent in modelling figures, to make her a small crib. Although he promised he forgot to do so, when our Divine Lord Himself deigned to satisfy her pious desires. He appeared to her as He was in the manger, with his Blessed Mother, St. Joseph, the ox, the ass, and three angels who joyfully sang the Christmas hymn. On the morning of the Epiphany the Dominican Father she had chosen as her confessor, opening the church doors, saw a globe of light fall from the sky and remain suspended in the air above Columba's house. Shortly afterwards she arrived at the church to go to confession, and when he asked her whether she had noticed anything unusual that morning, answered,

"I was praying to my sweet Jesus to show me the star of Bethlehem, when some one seemed to touch me, and looking up I saw a star so bright that the whole house was lit up."

Her heart was filled with grief when the remembrance of Christ's passion came to her mind. She often made His sufferings the subject of her meditation, and always with great profit to her soul. One evening she was piously representing to her mind all He had undergone so patiently and gladly for us, and had come to the flagellation, when such unusual grief afflicted her and she was seized with so earnest a desire to suffer for Him that she took her discipline and struck herself so unmercifully with it that her mother heard the sound and ran in crying, "My child! my child! what are you doing? Why should you kill yourself?" But Columba had fallen into ecstasy, and had heard not a word. During Mass she once saw our Divine Lord above the chalice, crucified, crowned with thorns, and covered with blood. She fell fainting, and when her confessor came begged him to pray that never again should she see such a sight,

"For," she said, "if I did I should die of grief."

Her ecstasies were very frequent. The first time her mother found her in that state she took her in her arms to carry her to bed, thinking she had fallen asleep; but letting her fall and perceiving no movement in her, began to cry out that Columba was dead. The neighbors, who ran in, began to blame her for allowing her daughter to live so penitential a life; but when her confessor came he restored her to consciousness by the power of holy obedience. These wonders having been talked of far and wide, a Spanish Bishop who was in Italy went to Rieti to see her; and on entering the Cathedral he saw a young girl kneeling in fervent prayer with a bright star over her head, and on inquiry found it was Columba. He spoke to her in the presence of her aunt, and was so pleased that he gave her a silver cross, which she wore until death.

Her vocation to the Dominican Order was made known to her when she was nineteen years old. Four saints, founders of religious orders, appeared to her in a vision; but she was most attracted towards St. Dominic, who

covered her with the black cloak of his order. She obtained permission from her parents and was received into the Third Order by the Prior of Rieti, on Palm Sunday, 1486. Clothed in the holy habit she studied to acquire the spirit of a true Dominican, especially fervent devotion to the holy Mother of God, and to this end organized a pilgrimage to the celebrated Dominican sanctuary of Our Lady of La Quercia, near Viterbo. The little band of pilgrims consisted of Columba, several members of the Third Order, and some of her relatives. As they walked along and passed through the villages and towns the people crowded around and venerated her as a saint.

When the pilgrims arrived at La Quercia they found a crowd of people in a state of great excitement. A woman possessed by an evil spirit had been brought there to be cured. Columba hurried to the miraculous picture of the Blessed Virgin of the Oak, and after some fervent prayers went to the possessed woman, who was detained in one of the side chapels. She addressed the demon and said, "In the name of Jesus Christ I order you to depart and never again to molest this woman." But

the devil answered, "For eighteen years I have possessed her. No one could drive me out, nor can you by your words deliver her from me." Columba laid her hands on the poor creature, took from her some charms, and again bade the evil spirit to depart. This time she was obeyed, and the woman was for ever freed from her tormentor. Such a marvel obtained for her so much veneration that she was obliged to leave La Quercia at once. Passing through Narni on her return the people schemed to keep her in the town, but she and her companions left in the middle of the night by an unaccustomed route.

Home again in Rieti, she was regarded by the people as a saint; the sick were carried to her to be cured, and her humility was often wounded by the veneration shown her. Wonders multiplied in her life, which henceforth was little else but a series of miracles. An inhabitant of Rieti had murdered a rich merchant, and having been convicted was condemned to death, in spite of the efforts of his family to obtain his pardon from the Pope. Giving up hope of saving his life, they became very anxious about his soul, and requested

Columba to visit him in prison, to persuade him to make his peace with God and to prepare for death. She succeeded; but after he had made his confession, told him that he would not be executed, and although the decree for his execution arrived, persisted in her statement; it turned out as she predicted, for a courier arrived bringing his pardon,

The parents of a boy of five years brought to death's door, sent for her to cure him by her prayers. He had lost consciousness before she entered the house and appeared to be dying. When Columba requested to be left alone with him, all retired; but his mother, overcome by curiosity, peeped through a chink in the door and saw her bend over the dying child and breathe three times on his face; he opened his eyes and said, "God be blessed that you came, I am cured." Meeting a woman on the road bitterly weeping, Columba asked the cause of her grief. "I am starving and no one will give me something to eat." Columba answered, "Do not weep, God will take care of you and provide what you need," and told her to return to her house. She did so and there found food in abundance.

Two years after her entrance into the Third Order she felt interiorly moved to leave Rieti, and without acquainting her relatives, went to Foligno, taking some prudent women with her. She arrived in Foligno, August 20th, 1488, and was gladly welcomed at the Convent of Poor Clares, where a cell was placed at her disposal. Her piety soon excited the admiration of the community, and it was also noticed that she scarcely ate or drank. But when they saw her one day soon after her arrival raised from the ground in ecstasy, they desired her never to leave them, and proposed to elect her their Superior. The Bishop having been informed of her remarkable spiritual gifts, sent to Rieti to inquire into her previous life, as did also the Governor of the city. Several Dominican Fathers accompanied the messengers on their return, and finding Columba in a convent of another Order, desired her to go to the Dominicanesses. She did so, but a few days afterwards left the city and went to Assissi and then to Perugia. As she was entering the Church of St. Dominic in the latter city, a dead child was taken to her which she restored to life. But she worked miracles of a higher

order—miracles of grace in the hearts of hardened sinners, who repented of their sins at her bidding and reformed their lives. The Perugians honored her exceedingly, and proposed to build a convent for her; but as usual many obstacles had to be overcome, and in the meantime the Master-General of the Order desired her to return to Rieti. The Father who carried his message found her in ecstasy before the Altar of the Blessed Virgin; and becoming angered because she did not answer when he spoke to her, took her head in his hands and shook her violently. When she had come to herself again she received the General's orders obediently and prepared at once to return to Rieti, but the people guarded all the roads leading out of the city and refused to let her go.

The convent in Perugia was built and dedicated to St. Catharine of Siena; the Rule adopted was that of Dominican Tertiaries living in community. Columba made her solemn profession on the Feast of Pentecost, 1490, being twenty-three years of age. Several young ladies joined the community, and some Tertiaries advanced in age entered the convent, so

that in less than two years Columba had fifty Sisters. Her mother having become a widow also joined her as a Sister.

In 1494 a terrible plague broke out in Rieti. The Magistrates and people sent to Perugia to ask Columba in what way they could best appease God's anger. She told them to make solemn processions and place the city under the patronage of St. Dominic and St. Catharine, and on their doing so the plague ceased.

In the next year Pope Alexander VI. celebrated the Feast of Pentecost in Perugia, and at his request Columba was presented to him. As soon as she touched his cassock she fell into an ecstasy, and remained for a very long time immovable as a rock. While the Pope awaited her recovery the Sisters who accompanied her were presented to him, and then retired, leaving Columba and her mother with the Holy Father. When her ecstasy had passed away she was told to sit down, and many questions were proposed to her, all of which she answered in the most satisfactory manner. But when the Pope began to speak of very high mystical subjects she fell into a second ecstasy. He seemed much displeased

and said to her confessor, "Take care: tell me what you think of all this." The Father answered, "Holy Father, Sister Columba came to this city several years ago. Since then she has lived the life of a saint. In the beginning I had doubts about her and took great care in examining her conduct; but I can confirm by personal experience everything said in her praise. Her abstinence is extraordinary, her penances very severe, and she sets no bound to her zeal in the service of God. After all, I know I can only say that if the name of Columba was substituted for Catharine in the life of St. Catharine of Siena it would be no more than the bare truth." The Pope was convinced, and when her ecstasy had passed away loaded her with spiritual favors.

Two years afterwards she had a vision of the evils with which the Church was threatened, and about the same time the Treasurer of the Apostolic Chamber sought an interview with her on the part of the Pope, who desired her opinion on the advisability of his abdication. This interview took place in the presence of her confessor. Under promise of secrecy she told her vision to the Treasurer, and although

she was ordinarily mild and gentle her reproaches were so terrible that the listeners trembled with fear. The marvels God had wrought by her changed her not in the least, and the longer she lived the more humble she became. To the Sisters of her community she was full of tender indulgence. She often compared the religious state to the ocean, which casts up on its shores the bodies of the dead. "In like manner," she said, "no Sister dead to grace can remain in a convent, for either she will repent of her sins, or be cast out on the cold shores of the world, or of her own free will leave the blessed retreat of the cloister."

During the whole time she lived in holy religion she ate neither bread, eggs nor meat, and drank nothing but water; her only food was fruit and herbs, and in Lent the Holy Eucharist was her only sustenance. She took care to hide her abstinence from all except from those who could not but notice it, and whenever any friends offered her delicacies she always accepted them. This caused some to say that she ate in secret, and that her fasting was feigned; these calumnies were be-

lieved and she was forbidden any intercourse with those outside the convent, and a priest little versed in the spiritual life was appointed her confessor. She resigned herself to this, submitted her will to the will of God, and learned to love Him more and more and her own will less and less.

When her health began to decline and it was evident her eternal nuptials were near at hand, St. Dominic appeared to her and said, "Rejoice! for the hour will soon come when you will forever be united to your Spouse." On the Epiphany, 1501, she fell into an ecstasy, and the Sisters thought she was dead; but she recovered consciousness and assured them that she would not die till the Feast of the Ascension. She began to prepare herself for the hour of death, increased her penances, and kept the silence required by the Rule very strictly. On Holy Saturday she assisted at all the ceremonies, then took to bed, and from that day Mass was said in her cell. For thirty-three days she suffered a burning fever, stretched on her hard bed, wearing a hair shirt, and girded with iron chains; and her only sustenance was a little

water. No suffering drew from her lips any complaint, and while she endured the greatest pain she was cheerful and happy.

She died on the night preceding the Feast of the Ascension, May 20th, 1501. Her last words were, "My Spouse! Oh My Spouse! Come! It is time!" and as she said this the soul of Columba, the white Dove of Christ, flew to heaven. After death her eyes remained open, a smile hovered on her lips, her cheeks were as fresh as in life, and she seemed as if yet alive. Her years on earth had been thirty-four. She was buried in the Chapel of St. Catharine of Siena in the church of the Dominican Fathers. Her soul crowned in glory appeared to her friend and fellow Dominican, Blessed Osanna of Mantua.

Pope Benedict XIII. granted permission to the Dominican Order and to the clergy of the diocese of Perugia and Rieti to celebrate a feast this day in her honor.

BLESSED LOUIS GRIGNON DE MONTFORT.

BLESSED LOUIS GRIGNON DE MONTFORT.

OF THE THIRD ORDER.

May 23.

1673–1716.

IT was in Brittany, the most Catholic Province of France, the land of miraculous shrines, where the Immaculate Mother of God showers her blessings with so lavish a hand, that Louis Grignon Bacheleraie was born. And truly among the devoted children of Mary sprung from France, none have loved or served her more faithfully than he; for he made it the work of his life to spread devotion to Mary, and converted innumerable sinners by preaching the holy Rosary, Mary's own prayer.

He was born January 3rd, 1673, at Montfort-la-Canne, near Rennes; from which he assumed the name of Montfort, instead of his

family name. He was the eldest of eight children, and was remarkable in his tenderest years for piety, and the facility with which he communicated his own devotion to others. He was a born missionary; for when only a boy he gathered around him his little companions to preach to them and teach them the catechism. As soon as he was old enough to leave home he was sent to the Jesuit College in Rennes, where he attracted the attention of the Fathers by his conscientious application to study and genuine piety. Every moment he could spare he spent in visiting the sick in the hospitals, consoling them in their afflictions, and instructing them in the truths of religion, of which he found many sadly ignorant. He also applied himself to painting, an art for which he showed great talent.

Several of the Jesuit Fathers of the College have left an account of the impression Louis made upon their minds at this time. Among them was Father Blain, who says that Louis was so utterly free from vice that he did not know it was possible to sin against chastity, although he had come to the age when so

many lose their purity, the brightest ornament of youth. Louis was also noticed for his kindness and charity towards his fellow-students. One of them was so poor that he became the butt of his companions' mirth on account of his badly-fitting clothes. Touched with pity, Louis made a collection in the College to buy him clothes more like those of the other students. But not being able to collect sufficient, he went to a tailor, holding in his hand the money he had succeeded in obtaining, and introducing the poor youth to him said: "Here is my brother and yours. I have collected in my class as much as I could to clothe him. It is not sufficient; you must supply the rest." His appeal produced the desired effect. The tailor could not resist, and the student was no longer laughed at for the uncouthness of his garments. Louis never passed by the Carmelite Church without entering to spend a few moments in prayer at the altar of his "good Mother Mary"; and it was there that God made known to him his vocation to the priesthood and to the apostolic life. Through the kindness of a lady, Madame Montigny, he went to Paris (1693) to enter the Seminary of

St. Sulpice, which the venerable M. Olier had founded. Madame Montigny seems not to have been very generous, for he was obliged to make the journey on foot, a hardship he cheerfully endured, offering it to God as a penance, in imitation of our Divine Lord, who needed even the necessaries of life. When he arrived in Paris, instead of placing him in St. Sulpice, as she promised, Madame Montigny put him in a small community of poor ecclesiastics; and after a few months ceased to pay his pension. But although the little community that year was in great want, the Superior and founder, M. de la Barmondière, consented to keep him, on condition that he earned his own support by watching around the bodies of those who died in the parish of St. Sulpice. Louis joyfully accepted this trying duty, which came at least three times a week, and turned it into a most powerful means of advancing in perfection; for although he lived a life of exceedingly great penance, making constant use of all the bodily austerities practised by the saints to preserve innocence of heart, such as hair-shirts, iron chains, and the discipline, yet no penance was so useful to him as this. Four

hours of these vigils he spent in prayer, kneeling the whole time, his hands clasped and his body immovable. Two hours were devoted to spiritual reading, two to sleep, and the rest of the night to study of theology for the next day's classes. Sometimes he meditated on death, when, to impress on his mind the inevitable end of pleasure and the uncertainty of life, he raised the face-cloth from the dead, and gazed at the ravages death inflicts on the beauty of the human body.

He received the ecclesiastical tonsure on Ember Saturday, September 18, 1694, after making a spiritual retreat at St. Lazare. M. de la Barmondière died during his absence, and the community was dissolved. He obtained admittance into another community of ecclesiastics directed by M. Boucher. It was a true school of penance and mortification. Mind and body were subjected to the severest restraints. Austerity and incessant study injured his health, and being attacked by a malignant fever, he was sent to a public hospital, where patience in suffering, his resignation to the will of God, and gratitude for the least service done him, gained him universal admiration and respect.

On his recovery, he was admitted to the Seminary of St. Sulpice (1695), a pious lady, Mlle. de l'Alègre, having promised to support him, the Director, M. Bouin, having procured a benefice for him. He was now twenty-two years of age. His piety soon made him an object of admiration to the students, who regarded him as a perfect model. Some of them put on record the impression his holiness made upon them; they tell us he could speak of nothing else but God and holy things; that he loved to speak of the Blessed Virgin, in whose honor he wrote beautiful hymns, and sung them to his companions. But God desired to try him, and by trial to perfect his sanctity and allowed the superiors and his companions to subject him to the most searching mortifications. He was made to undergo the greatest trials his superiors could invent; and commanded to lessen his penances, which his humility regarded as insufficient for his sins. Then he was told to speak of ordinary subjects in recreation time, contrary to his inclination, which led him to speak of God only. But he bore all with saintly patience, and gave a ready and cheerful obedience to all the

wishes of his superiors. They tell us, however, that when he attempted to speak of worldly things, he entirely failed to be interesting, there being nothing amusing in his conversation except the pious way he told his little anecdotes.

The Ven. M. Olier had established a custom of sending two students every year to make a pilgrimage to some sanctuary of the Blessed Virgin on behalf of the seminary. Louis was chosen to go with another student on a pilgrimage to Our Lady of Chartres. As soon as he arrived in the city, he ran in haste to throw himself at the feet of the miraculous statue of the Blessed Virgin, and received Holy Communion with great fervor. He remained from six in the morning until noon in prayer, immovable as a statue, and as if carried out of himself. After dinner he returned to the feet of the Madonna, and continued his prayer until evening. He always went to the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris on Saturdays to receive Holy Communion in honor of the Mother of God in her chief shrine, and it was there, at her feet and under her protection, that he made a vow of chastity.

Charged to teach catechism to the children in one of the lowest parts of Paris, he gained their hearts by his kindness and zeal, and first manifested signs of the wonderful power over souls he was to exercise in his missionary labors.

His conduct having gained the warm approval of his superiors, he was ordained priest, June 5th, 1700, being then twenty-seven years of age. His humility made it necessary for his superiors to put him under obedience to take upon himself the priestly office. He spent the day of ordination in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. He said his first Mass a few days after his ordination at the altar of the Blessed Virgin in the Church of St. Sulpice.

We have lingered long on the youth of this holy servant of God, for the youth of a saint, like the dawn of day, or the first flower of spring, has a beauty all its own not surpassed by the riper glory of perfect age. No sooner had he been ordained when an earnest longing to become a missionary in foreign lands began to engross his thoughts; but God destined him to labor for the salvation of his own

countrymen, and soon pointed out the work to him. Shortly after his ordination he entered a community at Nantes, founded by a holy priest, M. Levegue, where, however, he did not long remain, as he found nearly all the priests were tainted with the errors of Jansenism. Nevertheless, it was while he was there that he commenced preaching missions, which was to be the work of his life.

Returning to Paris from Nantes he determined to visit one of his sisters, a professed nun in the Abbey of Fontrevrault. Arriving at the gates he begged an alms for the love of God. The portress asked his name, to which he only answered, "Give me charity for the love of God." The Sister ran and told the Abbess, who went to the gate and asked him who he was. "Why do you desire to know my name?" he said. His holy simplicity was misunderstood, and he was sent away without relief. When his sister heard that a strange priest had asked for charity like any common beggar she divined who it was and ran after him, but could not persuade him to return. He asked and obtained an alms at the first house he came to, then went on his way praising God.

Going to Poitiers he said Mass in the chapel of the hospital, and remained there nearly a year, visiting the sick, and teaching catechism to the children. He gained great influence over the students in the city, who reformed their lives under his loving care, and began to give edification by their piety to those who had been scandalized by their evil ways. When he returned to Paris all his old friends turned against him. Abandoned by all, and totally destitute, he was obliged to lodge in a cottage, and to sleep in a bed under a staircase. After three months he was recalled to Poitiers to take spiritual charge of the hospital, and remained there two years. He chose the poorest room for his own, and ate the same food as the poor; often contenting himself with the remains of their meals. It was in this hospital that he laid the foundations of the Congregation of the "Daughters of Wisdom." He chose twenty young women, and gave them a superior who was blind; he obtained permission for them to live apart from the rest of the nurses, and gave them some rules of conduct. After a while he attracted to them a young lady of the city, who, under

the name of Sister Marie Louise of Jesus, was the superior of the little community.

Jealousy drove him from the hospital, and he offered himself to the Bishop of Poitiers for mission work. Then commenced the wonderful series of missions which was to end only with his life. He was thirty years of age, consumed with zeal, fearless as an apostle, and as strong in body as in soul. In twelve years he preached two hundred missions or retreats with most wonderful success. He preached without ceasing, and never allowed himself any repose except to recuperate his spiritual strength by a retreat, or when he was too feeble to labor for the souls God has redeemed.

In all his missions he followed a general plan. He invariably preached devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary as the means of perseverance, and indefatigably propagated the devotion of the Rosary. In many places he found the church in need of repairs, and always arranged that it should be restored as soon as possible. He also took the poor under his care, obtained money for them, washed their clothes, fed them, bathed their feet, and often shared

their frugal meals. They loved him beyond measure, and wherever he went he was surrounded by these beloved ones of Christ.

The Bishop of Poitiers sent him to preach a mission at Montbernage, a suburb of the episcopal city, where he produced a very remarkable change in the people. This mission was followed by another in the Church of the Sisters of Calvary in the same city. He obtained such power over his audience that he persuaded them to gather together all the bad books, and obscene pictures, and pile them in a heap in the square before the church on the spot he intended to erect the cross at the close of the mission. At the summit of the pile was placed a figure of the devil. A report spread among the people, and reached the Vicar-General, that the missionary was going to burn the devil in effigy. Already prejudiced against him by some who were jealous of his success, the Vicar-General went to the place and publicly reprimanded him for his imprudence. Louis listened humbly, said not a word in self-defence, but when the Vicar-General had gone, contented himself by saying, "We intended to plant the cross here at

the church doors; God has wished otherwise; our superiors do not desire it; let us plant it in our hearts, it will be better there than anywhere else."

He immediately commenced another mission in Saint Saturnin, near Montbernage. In this parish were public gardens where libertinism reigned, a scandal to all and the ruin of many. Every evening during the mission he went there, and, kneeling down, disciplined himself to blood to expiate the sins committed in that unholy place; and at the close of the mission he preached to those he found in the gardens. His words touched their hearts, tears flowed from their eyes, and sobs burst forth from their breasts. In a prophetic mood he declared that a community of nuns would dwell there, and dedicate the ground to the holy service of God. His words came true. He laid the foundations of a hospital, which to this day is served by the Daughters of Wisdom.

He next gave a retreat to the Dominican Sisters. But again he became the object of mistrust on the part of the Bishop, who was prejudiced against him by some priests tainted

with Jansenism, and was requested to leave the diocese. He had often desired to go to Rome, and he seized this opportunity to do so. He went on foot the whole way, begging as he went along. More than once he was obliged to sleep in the porch of a church. The Holy Father Clement XI. received him with the greatest affection, but when he requested permission to preach in heathen lands, said: "You have in your own country a field worthy of your zeal." Louis obeyed, and returned to France, where after making several pilgrimages he offered his services to his own Bishop, who employed him in mission work. He was accompanied on his missions by Brother Maturin, a holy man he had associated with himself, and who was the first of a religious congregation he afterwards founded. He commenced his labors in Rennes, where his father and mother lived; and his uncle was a priest attached to the Church of Saint Saviour. He did not go to his father's house, but lodged with a poor woman who could give him nothing to eat but cakes made of buckwheat, and the most miserable accommodation. Going to the hospital every day he was soon recognized

by some who had known him when he was young, and consented to visit his parents, but could not be induced to live in their house. He preached in the seminary and in the Church of Calvary. Entering the church one day he found it crowded with people anxious to hear him. He reflected a few moments and then said: "You have come in crowds thinking to hear a great preacher. I shall not preach, I have come here to pray," and kneeling down he poured out a prayer, so beautiful, that the hearts of all were touched and moved to love of God more efficaciously than by any sermon.

After a visit to Montfort-la-Canne, his birthplace, he went to Dinan. One morning he sought to the Dominican church to say Mass at the altar of the great preacher of the Rosary, Blessed Alan de la Roche. Entering the sacristy he met his brother, one of the Dominican Fathers, who did not recognize him. "My dear *Brother*," said Louis to him, "be kind enough to give me vestments for Mass." This displeased his brother, who, being a priest, expected to be addressed by the title of Father. So he showed his displeasure by

putting out old vestments, and expressed his displeasure to Brother Mathurin. When he left the church, Louis said to him: "Thank you very much, I hope to return to-morrow, give me the same vestments again." During the day the Dominican met Brother Mathurin on the street and, when he learned the name of the priest, knew that it was his own brother he had treated so discourteously. The next morning when Louis went to say Mass he apologized, and we need not say gave him the most beautiful vestments in the sacristy. One evening Louis found a poor man in the street covered with ulcers, and taking him on his own shoulders, carried him to the house of the Lazarist Fathers where he was lodging. He gave him his own bed, and spent the night in prayer.

There was in Brittany, at that time, a very successful missionary, M. Ludugér, Vicar-General of Saint Brieuc. He invited Louis to join his company of missionaries. Although many of them were very able and zealous, Louis soon took the lead, and wherever he went was surrounded by crowds anxious to listen to his sermons, and to confess in his ear.

After a most successful mission at La Chèze, he went to give a retreat to the Daughters of the Cross at Saint Brieuc, where he remained three months, preaching every day, hearing confessions, and exercising the work of the ministry. He fed two hundred poor men daily, serving them with his own hands, taught them the catechism, and said the Rosary with them.

After a mission at Montcontour Louis next went to Montfort-la-Canne, his native town, and lived in a little hermitage he found in ruins and restored. It is still in existence, his *prie-dieu* stands in the middle, and to it is chained a large Rosary. Pilgrims kneel there and say the Rosary with it in pious memory of the servant of God and client of Mary. His father and mother hearing he was there visited him, and endeavored to persuade him to go to their home in Rennes ; but he declined, preferring to live like his Divine Master, who had no roof to cover Him, nor pillow for his head. During the mission at Montfort he adopted a strange method of preaching. He mounted the pulpit one day, but said not one word. He erected a crucifix in the pulpit, and

descended among the people, leaving Jesus to preach for himself. Then he went round the congregation, another crucifix in hand, giving it to all to kiss, saying to them: "Behold your Saviour! are you not ashamed to have offended Him?" Then he knelt down, and held the crucifix for the people to kiss its feet. Every one felt great sorrow for his sins, and the effect of this strange sermon was marvelous.

His remarkable success in mission work drew down upon him the jealousy of many, who complained to the Bishop who forbade him to officiate in his diocese, (1708). He next turned his steps towards the diocese of Nantes. P. Joubert, a holy Jesuit, was giving a mission in the Church of S. Similien, in Nantes. Louis offered his services to assist, and was joyfully accepted. His zeal in this memorable mission more than once endangered his life. Libertines, enraged at his fearless denunciation of vice, attacked him one evening and would have killed him if he had not been rescued. Another time he came across a number of soldiers and workmen engaged in a quarrel. After kneeling down to say the "Hail Mary,"

he threw himself into their midst, and succeeded in separating them. He saw a gambling table near by, and divined that it had been the cause of the quarrel. It was not many moments before he had overturned it. The soldiers were so enraged at this that they seized him by the hair, tore his soutane to pieces, and threatened to kill him if he did not pay for the broken table. "I would willingly pay fifty thousand dollars if I had them; I would willingly shed every drop of my blood if I could put an end to gambling," he answered. The soldiers hurried him to prison. Holding his beads in his hands he walked along joyfully, saying the Rosary aloud. Crowds of sympathizers accompanied him; and all regarded him as a saint. But he was rescued from his ignominious position before the prison was reached. The next day he was visited by a priest, who found him in joyful mood. "What do you think of yesterday?" said Louis to him. The priest answered that he came to express his sorrow for the humiliation to which he had been so unjustly exposed, but Louis said, "I was never so happy in my life. My joy would have been

complete if I had been locked up in prison;" and then he broke out into a cantique in honor of the Cross of Christ.

After the mission at Vallet he commenced another at Chevroliére, where his health gave way; but although he was very sick for more than two weeks he did not interrupt his labors, and from there he went to Vertou, where at the end of the mission he made a large bonfire of all the bad books he could get together. Then followed the famous mission of Pontchateau, where he erected the Calvary. Again jealousy and calumny put an end to his work, and the Bishop of Nantes forbade him to labor any longer in his diocese. It was a bitter chalice he had to drink: his Calvary pulled down, his voice silenced, abandoned by friends, and his enemies rejoicing over his misfortunes. But he knew that undeserved disgrace patiently borne, rendered him more like to the "Man of Sorrows, acquainted with grief," and profited by his enforced leisure to pray more, and to compose some beautiful hymns. Many of the popular cantiques sung in France are from his pen.

It was at this time that he entered the Third

Order of Saint Dominic. He was admitted by the Prior of Nantes, in the Dominican church, November 10th, 1710.

After the mission at Pontchateau he went to Nantes to console himself by prayer and recollection. He next went to the diocese of La Rochelle, and preached a mission at Garnache, and in 1711 made his first visit to La Rochelle, where he gave four missions, one in the hospital, and three in the Dominican church; one for men, another for women, and the third for soldiers. They were marvelously successful; tears fell from the eyes of those who heard his sermons, and so many went to confession that there were not sufficient priests to hear them. Many Calvinists were converted, and a general reformation of morals and increase of piety took place among Catholics. His success was so hateful to the Calvinists that they attempted to poison him; he escaped death but felt the evil effects of the poison to the end of his life. The mission to the soldiers was the most successful. They crowded the church, and when he went out officers and men surrounded him. Finding that many of them could not read he wrote a

hymn for them to sing, which contained a rule of life and proved very useful in keeping up the good wrought by the mission. At the close there was a grand procession, in which all the soldiers marched barefooted, carrying a cross in one hand and a rosary in the other. As the procession halted at the gate of St. Nicolas, while he was addressing the people, some who stood around suddenly cried out: "A miracle! a miracle! we see a cross in the air!" and every one who looked up beheld it. It was witnessed by the immense crowd of people, among whom were upwards of a hundred of superior education and social position; all of whom gave evidence to the fact.

He next went at the request of the Bishop of Luçon to preach in the ile d'Yeu. The sea was infested with pirates from Guernsey and Blessed Louis found it difficult to find sailors willing to carry him and his companions to the island. When about three miles from shore a pirate vessel was seen sailing towards them, and the sailors exclaimed, "We are lost!" and rent the air with their laments. But Louis began to sing a hymn and asked his companions to join him. Fear however

choked their voices and they could not sing. "Since you cannot sing," he said, "you can say the Rosary with me." They did so, and when they had finished he said, "Do not fear in the slightest, our good mother Mary has heard our prayers, we are out of danger." But the sailors indignantly answered, "How can you say so, do you not see that the enemy is bearing down close upon us?" He answered them that the wind would change, and had no sooner spoken than the change came; the pirates turned and sailed away. The whole crew joyfully sang the "Magnificat" with Louis in thanksgiving for preservation from so fearful a fate as falling into the hands of such desperate men.

The islanders received the holy missionary most joyfully, but the authorities harassed him as much as lay in their power. After the mission he returned to Garnache, where he blessed a chapel dedicated to Our Lady of Pity. His next mission was near Salertaine, where in spite of a most unpromising reception he worked miracles of grace. The parish was in a disgraceful state; lawsuits and scandals abounded. He changed all this, put an

end to fifty law cases, reconciled over a hundred enemies, and persuaded untold numbers to restitution.

St. Christopher was his next mission, thence he returned to Garnache to preach the preparation for death. This consisted of a short mission of three days during which he preached on death. He then returned to La Rochelle, where he had the satisfaction of finding that the effects of his missions had proved lasting. In 1713 he journeyed to Paris in the hope of obtaining priests to assist him in his missions, but succeeded in securing only one. In the capital he gave retreats to three communities. On his return to La Rochelle he fell into a severe sickness that lasted three months. The following year we find him in Rouen. On the way back to Rennes he made part of his journey on a river boat which was crowded with peasants who had been to market in Rouen and who whiled away the time in obscene conversations and lewd songs. As soon as Louis heard them he knelt down and taking his rosary into his hands invited the passengers to join him in reciting it. Peals of derisive laughter were the only response to

his appeal. He waited until the passengers had ridiculed him as much as they desired, and a second time asked them to say the Rosary with him. The same mockery greeted him. He persevered and finally induced them to say the whole Rosary with him, after which he preached until the end of the journey was reached. Truly a miracle of grace, more marvelous than healing the sick or raising the dead! He continued his journey almost in silence, his head bare and his eyes gazing on the crucifix, praying and meditating without ceasing. Crowds gathered around him, and many were moved to tears when they saw how weak he was and felt sure they should see him no more.

He returned once more to La Rochelle, where preaching in the Dominican church there happened a miracle not uncommon in the lives of saintly preachers. During the sermon his pale and emaciated face was suddenly transformed by a heavenly light, and an aureole of glory surrounded him so that his friends could not recognize him except by the voice they knew so well. A mission at Amand so completely prostrated him that he

was forced to rest a week at Seguinere, where nevertheless he preached several times and conducted a procession in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary. He then went to Nantes and Mervent, where he restored the dilapidated church, and prepared himself a hermitage in the woods of Vouvent, whither he retired for retreat and prayer. While there he was favored by a vision of the ever Blessed Mother of God.

During a retreat to some sisters at Fontenay he gained M. Mulot, a young priest, who after his death became his successor as head of the Congregation of Missionary Priests. He never ceased to pray and earnestly sought the prayers of others for vocations to his congregation, and organized a pilgrimage at this time to a shrine of the Blessed Virgin near Saumer.

Before ending his life we must speak more fully about his devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and his zeal in propagating the devotion of the Rosary. From his youth Louis had most ardently loved and venerated God's most holy Mother. He called her in accents of the tenderest piety, "My Mother," "My dear Mother," and when he knelt before her

image he told her, in words of the most touching simplicity, all his wants. He always wore his rosary hanging on the girdle of his cassock to show how much he loved the Mother of God. He took up and made his own a devotion called the "Slavery of Mary," which he found in the writings of Boudon, and which is now called "De Montfort's Devotion to the Blessed Virgin." His first care in preaching a mission was to see that all who came had blessed beads, and many remarkable instances of the power of the Rosary are to be found in the history of his missions. At Montbernage, his first mission, he built a little chapel for the daily recitation of the Rosary. He made a collection to pay the expenses of decorating it and gave a beautiful statue of the Queen of Heaven, hanging a heart surrounded by thorns around its neck. This chapel remained a favorite shrine even during the great French revolution, when Montbernage was a shining light of religion during the almost universal apostasy, owing to the constancy of the inhabitants in reciting the Rosary.

At Dinan he made a present of a beautiful picture of the Blessed Virgin to the church,

and exhorted the people to say the Rosary before it every day. At La Chèze, one of his most wonderful missions, he restored a ruined chapel dedicated to "Our Lady of the Seven Dolors." St. Vincent Ferrer, the great son of St. Dominic, when preaching there, had expressed his desire to restore it, and said: "It is reserved by God for a man whom the Almighty will cause to be born in later times; a man who will remain unknown to the world, who will be contradicted and laughed at, but a man nevertheless who will bring this holy enterprise to a happy end." After a preparatory service of devotions, the statue presented by Blessed Louis was carried in solemn procession to the chapel, the people walking five abreast reciting the Rosary and chanting pious hymns. It was still in existence in 1785 and the custom he had established of saying five mysteries three times a day was duly observed.

Having been invited to preach a mission at Breal, at a time when it was impossible for him to go, he sent Brother Mathurin in his place, bidding him gather the people together to say the Rosary; and on another occasion having learned that the custom of reciting the

Rosary daily which he had established during a mission in the village of Vallet had been discontinued, he refused to pass through the village again. He established the daily recital of the Rosary in three different chapels in the island of ile d'Yeu; and in many religious communities.

But the most remarkable proof of Louis' devotion to the Rosary was the famous Calvary he erected at Pontchateu, near Nantes. He preached a mission there in 1709. It was his custom at the end of the mission to erect and bless a mission cross which would remind the people of the good resolutions they had made during the mission. But finding the people at Pontchateu so fervent, he determined to carry out a design he had long formed of erecting a magnificent Calvary. A fine site was soon obtained near the town, on a large heath which rose gradually from all sides to the centre, which he determined to raise and crown with an enormous crucifix. He told the people of his plan and led them to the place, beginning the work himself by turning the first sod. Thousands of helping hands were soon found, the rich as well as the poor

setting to work. The laborers kept the greatest order, no sound was heard except the chanting of the Rosary and the melody of pious hymns.

The entrance to the Calvary was by a large gate, from which a road ran round the hill to the summit. The centre of the mound was surrounded by a low wall, upon which were built pillars, which supported an enormous rosary; while on another terrace below were planted one hundred and fifty fir-trees to represent the one hundred and fifty Hail Marys of the Rosary. He also intended to build fifteen chapels of the Rosary Mysteries. The crucifix on the summit of the mound was fifty feet high; two other crosses bore the dying thieves, and statues of the Blessed Virgin, St. John the Evangelist, and St. Mary Magdalen stood at the foot of the cross. Louis obtained the necessary permission from the Bishop of Nantes to bless the cross on the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, September 14th, and thousands of pilgrims had already arrived for the ceremony when a terrible blow fell upon him; a prohibition arrived from the Bishop. He immediately set out for Nantes to see the

Bishop, but only succeeded in obtaining permission to bless it privately. His old enemies, the Jansenists, had done this; they had poisoned the Bishop's mind against him, and declared that he had fortified the Calvary to be able to resist any attack made upon him or his followers. These absurd reports even reached the Court, and soldiers were sent to destroy the Calvary. The cross was pulled down, the mound destroyed, and the heath restored to its original state. Louis never murmured; "Blessed be God," he said, "I have not sought mine own glory but only His, and I hope to receive the same reward as if I had succeeded."

He foretold that the Calvary would be rebuilt; which prophecy has been twice fulfilled; in the year 1747, and again when it was restored at a cost of five thousand dollars. The second restoration commenced early in the year 1821 and was finished in November; twenty thousand men giving each a day's work. It was solemnly blessed in the presence of more than ten thousand people by the Bishop of Nantes. The design of Blessed Louis was carried out in its essential features,

and the crucifix is the original one. Pilgrimages are frequently made to it, and miracles have taken place.

The last sermon preached by Blessed Louis on the "Sweetness of Jesus," at St. Laurent-sur-Sévre was so tender and pathetic that all who heard it were moved to tears. From the pulpit he went to bed, from which he never again rose. He made his will and devoutly prepared himself for death. In one hand he held a crucifix blessed for him by the Pope, and in the other a statuette of the Blessed Virgin, kissing them by turns. When it was known that he had received the last Sacraments crowds went to see him for the last time.

While singing one of his own hymns he died at St. Laurent-sur-Sévre April 28th, 1716, in the forty-fourth year of his age. His holy body was exposed in the church, and was venerated as that of a saint. A cultus soon commenced, great numbers went daily to pray at his tomb, and many were rewarded for their piety by miraculous cures of soul and body. He was beatified January 22nd, 1888, by Leo XIII. A translation of his principal work, "A Trea-

tise on True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary," was published by Father Faber, of the London Oratory, and has lately been re-edited and abridged by an American Father of the Order of St. Dominic.

BLESSED PETER SANZ.

BLESSED PETER SANZ,

AND HIS COMPANIONS,

FRANCIS SERRANO, JOHN ALCOBAR, JOACHIM ROYO, AND FRANCIS DIAZ;

MARTYRS IN CHINA.

May 27.

1747–1748.

WITHIN a few years after the foundation of the Dominican Order its missionaries had reached the most remote parts of the earth; and China, then known as Cathay, was evangelized by them even at that early date. Unfortunately all detailed records of the Dominican missions in that country previous to the sixteenth century have been lost.

After the holy Apostle St. Thomas, the first Apostle of whom any authentic record has been preserved, was the Dominican Father Gaspard of the Cross, who entered China in 1556, twenty-eight years before the two Jesuit

Fathers, Michael Ruggeri and Matthew Rici, who have been erroneously called its first Apostles, (1584). After several years of great success Father Gaspard was expelled from China and went to the island of Ormuz, after which he returned to Portugal, his native land. For nearly a hundred years the Portuguese Dominicans evangelized China until the Province of the Philippines was established by the Spanish Dominicans, who then took charge of it. In 1625 Father Bartholomew Martinez, with five other Spanish Dominicans, founded missions on the island of Formosa, whence they soon passed over to Fo-Kien, on the Chinese coast. In 1652 Father Angelus Cocchi preached in Fo-Kien. His success led to dire persecutions; and it was not long before the Dominican Apostles of China shed their blood for Christ. The first Martyr of China, like its first Apostle, was a Dominican, the heroic Father Francis de Capillas, who gave his life for the faith, January 15th, 1648.

The work of God flourished in spite of persecution until there arrived in China the five Dominican Martyrs whose feast is celebrated on this day. But before we record their

sufferings and glorious death we will give some account of their lives.

Blessed Peter Martyr Sanz was born September 3rd, 1680, at Asco in Catalonia, and entered the Dominican Monastery of Lerida, where he made his religious profession July 7th, 1698, and was ordained priest September 20th, 1704. After a short time in the monastery at Saragossa he went to Mexico, and subsequently to Manilla, where he devoted two years to acquiring the difficult Chinese language. He arrived in Fo-Kien in 1715, which he evangelized first as Prefect of the Mission, and then as Vicar Apostolic. After being exiled from China he was consecrated Bishop of Mauricastro, in 1730, and returned to Fo-Kien in 1738, to resume his apostolic labors. He fell into the hands of his persecutors in 1746, and was detained in prison nearly eleven months, during which time he was subjected to very cruel treatment. As a religious he was a model, indefatigable as a missionary, and a perfect Bishop, sparing himself in nothing for the good of souls.

Blessed Francis Serrano, who was a native of Cadiz, was born December 5th, 1695, and

took the habit of St. Dominic in his twentieth year in the Monastery of Granada. Pious and learned he gained the love and esteem of his Brothers in holy religion. He was professed April 22nd, 1714, and soon afterwards ordained priest. In 1725 he went to the Philippine Islands and two years later landed in Fo-Kien. His virtues and extraordinary zeal caused him to be nominated coadjutor to the Bishop of Mauricastro, with the title of Bishop of Tipasa. He was on his way to receive episcopal consecration when he was called upon by God to give his life as a testimony to the truth.

Blessed Joachim Royo, born in Arragon, October 3rd, 1691, entered the Dominican Monastery of Valencia. He was professed in 1710, and in 1712 embarked for the Philippines, and entered China as a missionary when only twenty-three years of age. For thirty-three years he labored with zeal truly apostolic to win souls to Christ, the difficulties he met serving only to excite in him a greater desire to suffer for his divine Master.

Blessed John Alcobar, who was born on Christmas Day, 1694, in the Kingdom of

Valencia, received the Dominican habit in the city of Granada when only sixteen years of age. For several years after his ordination he devoted himself to preaching, and felt so great a desire to convert those living in ignorance of the true faith that he obtained permission from his superiors to be sent to the Philippines; and thence started for Fo-Kien in 1728, where for eighteen years he preached in spite of almost incredible difficulties.

Blessed Francis Diaz, born 1713, in Ezija, made his religious profession in the Dominican monastery of his native town. He was remarkable for his sweetness of character, modesty and humility, and was no less distinguished for his monastic regularity and love of penance. Turning a deaf ear to the entreaties of his mother and sister, he sailed for China in 1735, where he preached for eight years.

Such were the five intrepid missionaries chosen by God to shed their blood for Christ.

In 1746 a persecution caused by a libel written against the faith broke out in Fo-Kien. The Viceroy, who was unfavorable to the missionaries, lent a willing ear to the accusations, and after a formal inquiry ordered their ar-

rest. The Mandarin charged to secure them, learning that they were all in a small village, went there to carry out his orders; but the Fathers had been warned, and fled before they arrived. A young native Christian girl was arrested in the hope that she would reveal the place of their concealment. "Tell us," said the Mandarin to her, "where are the Europeans?" and threatened her life when she answered that she did not know. "Here is my head," she said, "cut it off. I should rejoice to give my life for Christ." Several other Christians were tortured for the same purpose, but with the same result. At length the soldiers succeeded in capturing Blessed John Alcobar, Francis Serrano and Francis Diaz, but were much chagrined that the venerable Bishop and his companion had escaped. They immediately tried to force the captives to reveal the place of the Bishop's concealment, and when persuasions and threats failed, the three Fathers were condemned to suffer the fearful torture of slaps in the face. This consisted in forcing the victim on his knees, then one of the torturers knelt behind him on one knee and pulling back the head of the victim

held it on the other knee one cheek upwards, while another torturer beat the cheek with an implement somewhat like the sole of a shoe made of pieces of hide stitched together. One blow was often sufficient to cause the unhappy victim to lose consciousness; sometimes the teeth were broken, and the head became fearfully swollen and bruised. When the number of blows ordered was large both cheeks were beaten. The three martyrs remained mute under this torture; but when the holy Bishop heard of their sufferings he surrendered himself, and his example was followed soon after by his companion. The Mandarin had succeeded; he had all the missionaries in his power as well as some of the most prominent native Christians.

The captives were taken to Fou-Tcheou, where, after a journey of ten days of intolerable sufferings, they were at once locked up in separate cells. A trial was held, and they were condemned to be tortured. The venerable Bishop received eighty-five blows on the cheeks with invincible resignation and patience. Father Francis Serrano suffered fearfully, his face being a mass of wounds; Father Francis

Diaz was tortured twice and was also beaten on the soles of his feet.

At length sentence of death was pronounced by the Viceroy of Fo-Kien against the five missionaries and a catechist, Ambrose Ko, which sentence was confirmed by the Emperor, April 21st, 1747.

The holy Bishop Peter Sanz was the first to be executed. When the sentence was announced to him he said, "I die in defence of our holy religion; since I can no longer evangelize this country I will be its protector in heaven." On the way to execution he prayed so fervently that the Chinese were forced to admire his courage and the native Christians forgot their sorrow when they saw the triumph of the faith over brute force. When he knelt to be beheaded he said to his executioner, "Dear friend, I am going to heaven. How I wish I could some day see you there also." The man said: "I too desire it with all my heart."

This holy Bishop died for the faith, May 26th, 1747. He was sixty-six years of age.

The other Dominican Fathers and the Catechist remained two years in prison heavily

chained. Suffering in body they rejoiced in spirit. "You say that I am gay in my prison," wrote Father Francis Serrano to a Dominican Father. "It is true. What we offer to Jesus Christ our Saviour is so small that it would be sinful to give it with a bad grace. God loves a cheerful giver." Their only grief was that they were not called on to die for Christ. "Woe to me for my exile is prolonged," said one. "I was glad when they said to me we will go into the house of the Lord," said another.

At last the glad day came. They were put to death in prison. Father Joachim Royo's death was horrible in the extreme. Executioners entered his cell, threw him on the ground, gouged out his eyes, slashed his face, forced rags soaked with spirits of wine into his ears, and then thrust his head into a bag filled with lime. The other Fathers were strangled, October 28th, 1748. Their bodies were ultimately recovered by the missionaries and the faithful Christians. Their heroic constancy should incite in our hearts the desire if not to die for the faith at least to be faithful to its teaching. They were solemnly beatified by Leo XIII., May 14th, 1893.

BLESSED MARY BARTHOLOMEA.

BLESSED MARY BARTHOLOMEA,

OF THE THIRD ORDER.

May 28.

1514–1578.

In the life of this holy Tertiary, those afflicted with a long and lingering sickness will find a beautiful example of resignation to the holy will of God.

She was a native of Florence, and was born on the Feast of St. Bartholomew, August 24th, 1514. Her father, Charles Renieri de Bagnesi, and her mother, Alessandra Orlandini, were both of noble family. At baptism the sweetest name bestowed on women was given to her. She was put out to nurse in the village of Impruneta, near Florence, famed in the neighborhood as a sanctuary of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The nurse neglected the little child, and Mary often wanted

for food; which was the cause of her extremely frail health. When again taken home by her parents her winning ways and remarkable beauty soon attracted attention. Every one caressed her, and none could help loving the beautiful but delicate child, whose joyful face warmed every heart, and whose "eyes shone like stars," according to the expression of one of her biographers.

She had a sister, a Religious in Florence, who often sent for her to come to the convent. This holy nun taught her to sing, and delighted to call the Sisters to listen to her. "Sing, Marietta!" she would say to her; but the little girl, being afraid, would run away to hide herself. "No one will see you," said her sister to her. "Sing, Marietta, your prettiest songs." And then Marietta, with her face beneath the veil of one of the Sisters, would commence to sing a hymn to Jesus or Mary. Sometimes her sister would say to her, "Marietta, whom will you have for your spouse?" "Jesus," was her constant answer, "Jesus shall be my spouse"; and when any one dared to say that such could not be the case, tears fell from her eyes, and she could

not be consoled until she was assured that none but Jesus would be the spouse of her soul.

She dearly loved to hear sermons, and could not restrain her delight when told there was to be a good one. One of her aunts happening to say that she was going next day to listen to a sermon by a celebrated preacher, Marietta asked to be allowed to go with her; and although her aunt promised that she could accompany her, she was so afraid of being left behind that after remaining awake the whole night, she was up and dressed the next morning as soon as the sun arose. On the way to the church torrents of rain fell, but nothing deterred they arrived at the church in time for the sermon, to which she listened with wrapt attention, drinking in every word that fell from the preacher's lips.

When her sisters had either married or entered a convent, the care of the house devolved on her, although she was still very young. She threw herself heart and soul into her work. "As light and prompt as a bird, she was everywhere at the same moment," says her biographer. Yet not an accustomed

prayer or any pious exercise she had adopted was omitted. Always smiling, she inspired others with her own cheerfulness. "Why should you be sad?" she often asked of those in grief. "Do your duty, and Jesus, the Perfect Joy, will come into your heart and drive away all sorrow."

One day her mother fell down as if dead: Marietta's cries seemed to restore life long enough for her to receive the last sacraments, after which she died.

As was to be expected, her beauty, charming character, and filial piety attracted the attention of several young men who desired to marry her. When she was eighteen her father, thinking to secure her a desirable husband and a happy home, promised her in marriage; but when he told her what he had done she turned pale, trembled in every limb, and could not utter a word. As soon as she recovered she hurried to tell her confessor, who spoke to her father and advised him to leave her free to follow her inclinations. She fell sick, and for forty-five years was confined to her bed, with the exception of one short interval of a few days. A strange

change was wrought in her body, and a constant trembling took possession of her limbs. Her nerves contracted, an incessant fever burnt her, her head ached almost continually, and she was often attacked by spasms. Her father had recourse to quacks and charletans. Under their treatment it was once thought she was dead, but her eyes opened and she said, "Do not grieve for me, for I must live yet many years and suffer much. May God's holy will be done." Her father next called in a female doctor, who covered her all over with a mixture of hot salt and bran. When it was taken off she was one wound from the crown of her head to the soles of her feet. "I am like the grape under the wine press," she said; but the people saw in her a likeness to St. Bartholomew wounded and bleeding in the hands of his executioners. It was for this reason she called herself Bartholomea.

Confined to bed, her room was changed into an oratory, and permission obtained for Holy Mass to be said there. Many visitors called to see her, and were deeply impressed by her cheerful resignation to God's holy will, and her patience in suffering. Sometimes

she addressed them, and made use of very apt examples to illustrate her meaning. How true and forcible is the following: "See in those paper flowers on my little altar an image of hypocrites. They are shams that have no perfume of solid virtue. Alas, am I not like them? not like the roses which have real life and blossom into flowers."

When fifteen years of sickness had passed away her father, seeing his child growing weaker and weaker, and fearing she must die, went to her one day and said, "My child, I know that you have always desired to be a nun. Such a life is impossible to you, but why not take the habit of the Third Order of St. Dominic?" She smiled with joy and said. "There is nothing I desire so much as to die clothed in the holy habit of the Sisters of Penance of the Order of St. Dominic." A habit was at once made, and she was clothed in the Tertiary habit by a Dominican Father of Santa Maria Novella, and made her profession a year afterwards. At her profession she made the three vows of poverty, obedience, and chastity. She asked her confessor in what the latter consisted. "Chastity," he

answered, "is to take Jesus for your spouse." "I have never desired anything else but to belong to him," she said.

Her reception into the Third Order seemed to work a temporary improvement in her health, and she was able to go out once to visit the Dominican Fathers and her sisters of the Third Order. She returned to her home never again to leave it. The Dominican Fathers of Santa Maria Novella visited her, but being unable to go as often as they desired on account of the distance, they found a pious priest, Augustine Campi, who took up his abode near her house and said Mass in her room every morning. He became her confessor, and wrote her life.

The life of every true Christian worthy of the name is an example of virtue, but when the soul is nailed to the Cross by suffering it becomes Christ-like. Blessed Mary practised every Christian virtue in a very eminent degree; but more especially Charity, Obedience, Humility, and Patience. She offered her life to God, and willingly bore a long and tedious sickness for love of Him. Sinners were attracted to her bedside and confided to her the

state of their souls with loving confidence. A young man who had fallen a prey to despair and meditated taking his life was persuaded to visit her. After a few words his confidence in God's mercy was restored, and he went away happy and contented. Told that two young Florentines were condemned to death, she desired to suffer the penalty of the law in their stead, and would have done so if it had been possible. She kept most strictly the vow of poverty made at her profession; and never gave anything away without express permission from her confessor; and when he told her that he approved in advance of every thing she desired to do for the poor, she said it was too ample a permission, and never afterwards failed to give him an exact account of any presumed permission. She obeyed him in all things, and never for a moment forgot she was under vow to do so. Her humility knew no limits. She confessed her faults every day, shedding sorrowful tears, and when her confessor said to her, "I cannot think you are as guilty as you say," she replied, "If I was as I ought to be, things would not happen as they do. You see me nearly every hour; I pray

you correct me when I am in fault. This I ask for God's sake." She often accused herself of her faults to those who visited her, and when they reminded her of her good works, said, "My good works! I do nothing as I ought to do. I am Sister Spoil-all." Another time she said, "I am called Mary. Mary means Star of the Sea, and the Blessed Virgin truly is a shining star; but I am like a cinder. Mary means Mistress, and the Blessed Virgin by her virtues has command of the world, the flesh, and the devil; but I do not know how to conquer myself. Mary also means an ocean of bitterness, and the holy Virgin was drowned with sorrow on Calvary; but I, alas! am drowned in my sins, which are for my soul a sea of bitterness and confusion."

The purity of her heart shone in her face, and all who saw her felt inspired with love for chastity. Many were the times she thanked God for calling her to the state of virginity. She ate little and drank less, yet when any one praised her for her sobriety she attributed it to sickness and to bad digestion, for fear of any self-complacency. Patience was her characteristic virtue. Never on any occasion did she

murmur. The physicians who attended her were lost in admiration, and one of them was heard to say, "When any of my patients complain and count the days they have been sick, I always tell them to think of Sister Mary Bagnesi; many years sick yet always resigned."

The devil, allowed by God to tempt even the purest, attacked her virtue in various ways. She became haunted by the thought that her troubles were the effect of imagination, and that she was possessed by evil spirits. A report gained ground that she was the prey of diabolical power. One eminent ecclesiastic went to see her and to examine the case. "She is an angel from heaven," he said, "would to God we had more such." Her reputation was next assailed, but God protected it. A domestic employed to wait on her conceived a wicked aversion for her charge, and at the slightest provocation vented her rage on her. She bore all with perfect serenity. A woman who had lost her reason under injuries received from an enemy, forced her way into the saint's room. Blessed Mary reminded her of Jesus in the hands of his executioners. "Talk as you please," said the woman, "I

would eat the heart of that man if I could get it." Gathering together all her strength, Blessed Mary rose from her bed and threw herself at the wretched woman's feet, saying: "For the love of God do not talk in that way!" and tried to soften her heart and to persuade her to forgive the cruel injuries inflicted on her.

Our Divine Lord sometimes deigned to visit His suffering spouse to console her in her trials and to encourage her to persevere. One day her brother Charles took a lute into her room to entertain her, and played a pious melody upon it. At the sound of the music she fell into an ecstasy, arose on her bed; her eyes, her face, her hands, every part of her body, expressing the happiness of her soul. As a Dominican Father testified, no one could speak to her of God without causing her to fall into ecstasy. When these happy moments had passed away she covered her face with her hands to hide her confusion, and endeavored to convince those who had seen her in that state that it was the effect of sickness. Yet she could persuade no one to credit her words, for the hand of God was there.

Towards the end of her life she received Holy Communion nearly every day. Her physician had ordered her to take medicine sometimes early in the morning, but when he saw that on the days she could not feed on the bread of angels her strength declined, allowed her to take the medicine later on in the day. She devoutly kissed the hands of all priests because they touched the body of her Lord. On her bed she communed in spirit with God and gave the fruit of her prayers and meditations to those who visited her. "Go to confession often," she said to them. "Choose a confessor of tried virtue, but above all one gifted with prudence. Let him teach you the great art of prayer and devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary." "Value your time, and never let pass an occasion of doing good." "Avoid useless conversations as much as possible, for they are the dissipation of the soul. If it is difficult to unite the soul to God in solitude how much more so in the midst of the bustle of the world!" "Never desire to be known." "Happy are they who have few earthly cares." "Avoid curiosity, it is the source of a thousand anxieties. Why meddle with what does

not concern you? No one thinks of what he does not need."

The holy joyfulness that had been so characteristic in her youth did not abandon her in sickness. When she saw any one sad she said: "Throw yourselves into the arms of Jesus, the thought of Paradise will chase away even black thoughts. Everything must come to an end, sadness no less than other things. Do you imagine I shall remain on this bed for ever? you know that I shall not. As heaven is the reward of all our sufferings let us suffer joyfully, and abandon ourselves without reserve into God's hands."

One of her friends and spiritual disciples wrote an account of the impression she made on his soul. "The first time I went into the venerable Sister's room," he commences, "I felt bathed with heavenly perfume, and it seemed to me I could have spent my whole life in that home of sanctity. My emotion hindered me from talking much to her, ravished as I was by such patience in the midst of so great suffering, such humility, such virginal modesty. I went away with a desire to return soon, hoping to become one of her intimate

friends. I visited her again a few days afterwards, and timidly offered my services to her. She asked me to pray for her, and gave me a rule of life. On my return to my home the remembrance of the heavenly sight was always in my mind, and I could think and talk of nothing else.

"Overcome by weariness one day I went to the house of my angelic counsellor. As I entered the room she said, 'How good of you to come. Why have you been away so long? Only to-day I said to myself, Will not our dear friend come soon? and at once you knocked at the door, and I said 'It is he!' After so perfect a welcome she set herself to drive away all my sorrows. I had no need to tell them to her, she knew them all. To lighten my heart and to banish my sadness she spoke of God to me and of contempt of the world, in accents which transported me into a region of delight. Thanks to this holy woman's prayers I escaped from two mortal sicknesses.

"My wife, Constance Ugolino learned the science of perfection from this incomparable mistress, who taught her assiduous mortifica-

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tion, the exercise of humility and patience, and to frequent the Sacraments. I owe to her the health and life of several of my relations, in particular of my only son; and if I kept my position in the palace of the Grand Duke after several changes of the whole *personnel* of the Court it was again to her prayers I am indebted for it. She loaded me with favors both spiritual and temporal."

Animals loved her. She had a cage in her room filled with birds which seemed to know by instinct when she was sick or not, for they sang or remained silent according to the state of her health. A cat attached itself to her and took up its abode at the foot of her bed. It could never be persuaded to eat unless she did; and when she was fasting went out on the roof of the house and laid in wait until it caught a bird, when it carried its prey to its mistress and invited her to eat. If she fell into unconsciousness when no one was at hand it ran out of the room and seized the clothes of the first persons it met, and would not let go until they went to her assistance.

Blessed Mary knew well how to shorten the

visits of those who visited her from motives of curiosity. A countess, accompanied by numerous retainers, rudely burst into her room one day, and immediately began to put many questions to her. She pretended not to understand, spoke a few incoherent words, and succeeded in ridding herself of her unwelcome visitor. When the Grand Duchess went to see her, her humility was alarmed, and she made it her prayer that she might never again return.

Her pains increased every hour. Sometimes she was deaf, blind, and as if paralyzed, and it was with difficulty she could swallow. To her confessor she said sometimes: "It seems as if furious dogs were devouring my entrails and breasts. I feel as if I were cut into pieces." Then, turning to her beloved Redeemer, she said, "My Jesus, have pity on me; come to my aid." When there could be no longer any doubt her end was near, her confessor went for the parish priest to administer the last sacraments to her, which she received with the greatest joy in the presence of five priests. She died May 28th, 1578. Her virginal body was laid on her own bed, clothed

in the habit of the Third Order, a crucifix in her hand and a crown of flowers on her head. Crowds of visitors went to see and touch the holy body, which had not been the frail instrument of sin, but the faithful servant of her virginal soul, and carried away as precious relics some of the flowers strewed by loving hands on her bier. The doors were with difficulty closed at night, and the people besieged the house until they again opened next morning. An immense concourse accompanied the funeral to the church of the Carmelite Sisters in which she had desired to be buried. The tomb was near the altar, but some years afterwards the Sisters removed their holy treasure to the chapter-room. About the same time, St. Mary Magdalen de Pazzi, who was a member of the community, being in immediate danger of death, was cured by the intercession of Blessed Mary. She conceived a great devotion towards her, and was favored by God with several revelations of the glory granted her in heaven as the reward of her patience in suffering and her zeal for the salvation of souls.

Blessed Mary Bartholomea was beatified by Pope Pius VII., 1801.

BLESSED WILLIAM ARNAUD.

BLESSED WILLIAM ARNAUD, BLESSED BERNARD ROCHEFORT AND BLESSED GARCIA D'AURE.

THE HOLY MARTYRS OF AVIGNONET.

May 29.

THE ravages of the Albigensian heresy in France at the commencement of the thirteenth century, are well known. St. Dominic was raised up by God to combat this heresy, and, with the rosary in his hand, he and the chosen souls he had gathered around him and formed into a mighty religious order, succeeded in completely destroying it.

Yet in spite of all his efforts and undeniable success this heresy lurked in several places for some years after his death. His spiritual children, the Fathers of the Dominican Order, inheritors of his holiness and zeal, completed his work. Many of the Friar Preachers shed their blood and gave their lives in defence of

the doctrines of the faith denied by these obstinate heretics. The Dominican monastery of Toulouse had the honor of giving twelve martyrs to the cause of truth, in the short space of twenty years. Raymond, Count of Toulouse, the head of the heretics, published an edict by which he forbade any one to sell or give the Dominicans any food, and set guards at the monastery gates to prevent friends from affording them relief. Seeing themselves in danger of starvation all went to confession and piously prepared themselves to die for the faith; but by the Count's orders they were driven from the monastery. Rejoicing to suffer for Christ, they left the town in solemn procession, walking two and two, devoutly chanting the Creed and the Salve Regina. At Narbonne the Dominican monastery was sacked by the heretics, and all the holy books destroyed; and in many other places the Dominicans were subjected to petty persecutions worse than death. Those of the Order, who, by the Pope's command, were acting as Inquisitors of the faith, were forced to travel under the protection of an armed escort.

The chief of the Dominican Inquisitors was Father William Arnaud of Montpellier, well known for his zeal, purity of faith, devotedness to the authority of the Holy See, and his piety towards the Holy Mother of God. He had been appointed by Gregory IX. to labor for the conversion of the Albigensians, and acquitted himself of that dangerous duty with great zeal, drawing upon himself the hatred of those who closed their ears to the truth. He was accompanied on his mission by another Dominican, Father Bernard of Rochefort, and a Dominican lay brother, Garcia d'Aure, of the noble family of that name; also by Father Stephen of Narbonne and Father Raymond Carbonnier, Franciscans; the Prior of Avignonet, a Cluniac monk; Raymond de Costiran, canon of Toulouse; Peter Arnaud, notary of the Inquisition; Bernard, a clerk to Raymond de Costiran; and two beadles named Fortanier and Aymar, eleven in all.

Coming to the little town of Avignonet, five miles from Toulouse, Blessed William Arnaud preached against the errors of the times with his usual success. Needless to say the heretics hated him and his preaching, and in their blind

rage concocted a horrible plan to rid themselves of him and his companions. The castle of Avignonet was commanded by Raymond d'Alfaro. In the name of Count Raymond of Toulouse, Raymond d'Alfaro invited the Inquisitors and their followers to the castle, under pretense of desiring to be reconciled to the Church. A hundred armed men were waiting near the castle, and a dozen sergeants armed with hatchets lay in wait on another road for fear the Inquisitors should escape. It was the night of the twenty-eighth of May, 1242. On arriving at the castle, the Fathers were led into a large hall, and the conspirators entered at once by a side door. There they were joined by fifteen Albigensian inhabitants of Avignonet, armed, like themselves, with hatchets and staffs. When the holy martyrs saw them enter they at once understood why they had been sent for, and falling on their knees began to chant the "Te Deum." The heretics threw themselves on the defenceless men, striking at them with their hatchets, the governor of the castle, Raymond d'Alfaro, being the first to strike. The two beadles, who ran to assist their masters, were quickly overpowered,

and thrown out of the window. Some of the martyrs escaped from the castle, and running into the town gave the alarm. The Catholics ran in crowds to the castle, where, at the peril of their lives, they rescued two of the victims, and carried them to the parish church, hoping that the sanctity of the place would protect them from further outrage. But the murderers, leaving the bodies of their victims who had died under their blows, quickly ran to the church, fearing lest any should escape alive. There they ended their work. Father William Arnaud and Father Stephen of Narbonne were murdered in the church, and their blood stained the pavement of the holy place.

The bodies of all the martyrs were thrown out to be devoured by the wild beasts and birds of the air. The Dominican Fathers of Toulouse gathered together the holy relics and gave them burial. The bodies of Blessed William, Blessed Bernard and Blessed Garcia were buried in the Dominican Church in Toulouse, those of the Franciscan Fathers in the church of their own Order, and those of Blessed Raymond Costiran and Bernard, his clerk, in St. Stephen's Church in Toulouse.

When the martyrdom of these holy men was told in Rome, the Cardinals, the Pope having died, wrote a letter to the Dominican Provincial of Toulouse, congratulating him on the glorious martyrdom of his children.

The church of Avignonet, in which Blessed William and Blessed Stephen lost their lives for the faith, was placed under interdict, the people being obliged to hear Mass in the Church of the Benedictine Fathers. It remained closed for forty years under interdict, all exercises of devotion being forbidden in it. But the blood of the martyrs pleaded for the misguided people before the mercy seat of God, and their intercession and merits obtained the conversion of the whole town. A deputation of citizens went to Rome to beg Pope Alexander IV. to take away the interdict. This petition was granted in 1283. At the very moment when the Pope removed the interdict the bells of the church, which had been silent for forty years, rang out of themselves, and the church doors, barred with irons and fastened with strong locks, burst open. These wonderful events were testified to by the population of the whole town in 1293, and are

mentioned in the Bull of Paul III., 1538, which grants many indulgences to the church of Avignonet.

Many remarkable signs and miracles took place at the time of the martyrdom. Several days before, the Franciscan, Father Raymond Carbonnier, one of the victims, saw a beautiful gold crown hanging in the air over the castle. He told this to the Prior and monks of Prouile, when one of those who was to die a martyr, said, "We shall die soon in testimony of the truth of the Catholic faith." At the hour of martyrdom some shepherds, watching their flocks on the hills, saw a bright light in the sky. A woman sick in bed saw the heavens open, and ladders let down to earth, upon which saints, clothed in light, mounted to heaven. Juan, King of Arragon, watching in his royal tent, saw a brilliant light fall from heaven. "Be sure," he said to his officers, "that God is working some great marvel at this time;" and the Dominicans of St. Catharine's Monastery in Barcelona saw the same light. In Toulouse a devout woman went to one of the Dominican Fathers, while the community was chanting Mass, and said to him,

"I fell asleep in the church, and it seemed to me, to my great surprise, that I saw the crucifix over the entrance to the choir bleed a quantity of blood. The figure of Christ on the cross said to me: 'Go, find the Prior of the monastery and show him the place where the bodies of the martyrs are to be buried.'" The place thus pointed out was to the right of the crucifix.

The glorious title of martyr was given to these heroic defenders of the faith, and the people, anticipating the formal judgment of the Holy See, always honored them as saints. God rewarded their piety by many miracles. Stephen of Salanhac, Bernard Gui, St. Antoninus of Florence, and many other Dominican authors mention these miracles in their works. The Dominican Fathers of Toulouse recited an antiphon from the Office of Martyrs, with versicle and prayer, every evening in the choir after meditation; and on every anniversary of their martyrdom they made a solemn procession in their honor. In the year 1619 the General of the Franciscans visiting Toulouse, the bodies of the Franciscan martyrs were removed to a magnificent shrine;

but in the sad days of the great French revolution this shrine was destroyed, and the relics are now lost. The Dominican Fathers have made frequent attempts to find the bodies of the martyrs of their own Order, but have always failed.

Soon after the church of Avignonet had been restored to the service of God a beautiful statue of the Blessed Virgin was found near the principal entrance of the church. No one had seen it before, no one could tell whence it came; and it was looked upon as miraculous. In due time a festival was instituted, under the name of Our Lady of Miracles of Avignonet, and indulgences were granted by several Popes to encourage the devotion. The feast is kept in honor of the Blessed Virgin and the holy martyrs of Avignonet. On the eve of the feast, a statue of the Blessed Virgin is carried in solemn procession round the town by torchlight. On the feast itself, May 29th, a remarkable ceremony takes place in the church, called "The Vow;" and is the pious fulfilment of a vow made by some of the first who were converted from the Albigensian heresy by the intercession of the holy martyrs.

The whole population is seen walking on their knees, tapers in hand, from the miraculous statue of the Blessed Virgin near the church doors, to the altar rails, where a small statue of the Holy Mother of God is presented to them to kiss, by one of the parochial clergy. For six hundred years this beautiful ceremony has been faithfully observed.

An association, or confraternity, under the title of "Our Lady of Miracles of Avignonet," was established in the thirteenth century, and numbers six thousand at the present time, in one hundred and twenty parishes in the diocese of Toulouse and adjacent dioceses.

By a decree of October 6th, 1866, Pius IX. approved the immemorial cultus to Blessed William and his companions, and authorized a feast to be kept in their honor by the Dominican Order.

BLESSED JAMES SALAMON.

BLESSED JAMES SALAMON.

May 31.

1231–1314.

ALTHOUGH no very remarkable events are to be found in the life of this faithful servant of God and true son of St. Dominic, yet in him we find an example of every Christian virtue. His life was that of a just man, a life formed on the maxims of Christ and the holy Scriptures, and it teaches us how to aspire in all our thoughts and works to Christian holiness and evangelical perfection.

Blessed James was born at Venice in the year 1231. He was the only child of his parents, who were of noble family, and was left fatherless very early in life. His mother became a Cistercian nun, having left James to the care of her husband's mother, a truly pious woman. From the cradle he was holy in all his ways; chaste, humble, and obedient.

His only thought was to become a worthy disciple of Christ. His youthful heart, like soft wax, readily received the impression of his pious grandmother's teaching, and the seeds of virtue sowed by her in the virginal soil of his uncorrupted heart yielded rich fruits in mature years. What a beautiful example was this holy woman to parents and to all who have the care and the education of the young! How many there are who owe whatever good there is in them to holy instructions received in youth, and alas! how many are lost for want of Christian education and by over-indulgence at a time when the mind is formed, and the heart begins to seek an object for its love! James was taught by his grandmother to pray and to read at one and the same time; for she knew how difficult it is to instill principles of morality when the character has already been formed. The holy child loved prayer and delighted to read the history of the early Christian martyrs, and as he read his heart yearned to imitate them and to shed his blood for Christ's sake.

But the chief care of those who watched over his education was to keep him from evil

companions, whose bad example might ruin the good work began in him. Thus preserving his baptismal innocence intact and guarding his heart against the dominion of the passions Blessed James increased in wisdom as he advanced in years.

He became acquainted with a Cistercian monk, who taught him the science of prayer and meditation, and who suggested to him that he had a vocation to the religious life. The holy youth corresponded to the divine call and chose the Order of St. Dominic. He applied to be admitted into the Dominican Monastery of Sts. John and Paul in Venice and was accepted. He had never loved the world or its pleasures, and bade them farewell without a regret. He possessed large estates, but sold all that he had and distributed the proceeds to charitable institutions, and to the poor, reserving to himself only sufficient for the purchase of some books; and even this he gave to a young man who had asked to be received into the Order as a Lay Brother, to purchase some necessary clothing, and thus he entered the Order in absolute poverty.

Only the happiest results could be expected from so fair a beginning. His biographers tell us that during the sixty years he lived in the monastic life he never ceased to advance from virtue to virtue. In the true spirit of a Friar-Preacher his first care was to sanctify himself, and then to labor for the salvation of others. He made it his care to imitate the virtues he saw in others, and his duty to avoid idleness by occupying himself day and night either in meditating on the mysteries of the faith, reading holy and instructive books, or in ministering to the wants of his brethren. He sincerely loved to pray, and found in silence and solitude pure joys unknown to those whose only pleasures are obtained by the sinful gratification of the senses. This life of union with God, so happy and so little known, Blessed James regarded as a foretaste of heaven; and yet faithful to his Dominican vocation he was always ready to leave the cloister to preach, to give counsel, or to labor in any way for the salvation of souls. The high opinion in which he was held increased every day, and the great ones of this earth sought his direction and delighted to converse with

him. The veneration shown him became so marked that it wounded his humility and caused him great pain. After living in the monastery at Venice for more than twenty years he resolved to flee to some place where he would be unknown, free from the praise lavished upon him, and in no danger of frequent visits from his relatives. He chose the monastery of the Order at Forli, where the Rule and Constitutions were strictly observed, yet not to the detriment of apostolic labors. The monastery had no revenues and the greatest economy was practised, yet James obtained permission from his superiors to retrench his own necessities so as to be able to give the more generously to the poor. A lady sent him some wine for his own use; he gave it away to a family in great need, and with the Prior's permission disposed of all she gave him in the same way.

His pleasure was to visit the sick in the hospitals. It seemed as if God had endowed him with the faculty of gaining their hearts, and of leading them to love suffering for the love of God. Poorer than those who excited his compassion, no labor, no humiliation was too se-

vere to undergo to lighten their griefs. He sought the poor at the church door or in the squares, and when he had gathered them together he endeavored to excite in their hearts sorrow and sincere repentance for their sins He was called the "Father of the Poor," a glorious title, but deservedly merited by this holy and apostolic man. He spoke little, but chose his words carefully, and God gave such efficacy to them in conversation and in preaching that they never failed to produce great spiritual fruit. The afflicted and disconsolate always went away from him consoled, and the hardest heart was moved by his words to contrition and to fear the judgments of God. He often quoted the words of St. Jerome, "Happy is the tongue that speaks only of divine things." When he stood at the altar to say Mass all who assisted at the holy sacrifice were filled with devotion by his piety and recollection.

Several striking examples of the conversion of sinners are to be found in his life. One day when he went into the church before saying Mass he saw a young man in great distress, and begged him to make known to him his grief. The young man attempted to do so,

but being possessed with such a furious desire to avenge himself on some one who had done him an injury, could only answer by grinding his teeth while his whole body seemed convulsed by passion. As soon as Blessed James spoke to him his heart softened, he repented of his evil design and made his peace with God after having forgiven his enemy. A young Servite of Forli, an entire stranger to Blessed James, was sorely tempted to abandon his religious vocation, yet revealed his trial to no one. God made it known to Blessed James in prayer, who went to the Servite monastery and requested to see the young religious and warned him of the danger of the step he was meditating. The young man was astonished, and until the Father told him everything that had passed through his mind on the subject, denied it. He finally acknowledged all, and after begging the holy Dominican to pray for him, promised to persevere, a promise faithfully kept.

He was several times elected Sub Prior, and during his term of office gave a most perfect example of religious perfection and Christian virtue to the community; but as soon as his

term of office was ended, he joyfully returned to his beloved retirement in Forli.

In old age, when many infirmities befell him, instead of moderating his penances he increased them. At length he fell into a dangerous sickness, which he bore courageously and patiently, and died on the last day of May, 1314, in the eighty-third year of his age, after having passed sixty-six years in the Order. He was beatified by Clement VII., 1520.

In sacred art he is represented surrounded by the poor and lame, on account of his charity and of the many miracles worked in favor of the paralyzed. He is invoked against headaches and cancer, having suffered four years from a malignant cancer. A confraternity under his patronage was established soon after his death by the Master General of the Dominican Order.

BLESSED ALPHONSUS NAVARETTE.

BLESSED ALPHONSUS NAVARETTE,

AND TWENTY-TWO COMPANIONS OF THE ORDER OF ST. DOMINIC, TWENTY-TWO MEMBERS OF THE THIRD ORDER, AND SIXTY-FOUR MEMBERS OF THE CONFRATERNITY OF THE HOLY ROSARY, MARTYRS IN JAPAN.

June 1.

1571–1617.

AT the extreme east of Asia a large group of islands forms the Empire of Japan. It is divided into several petty kingdoms under one supreme Emperor. The principal cities are Yeddo and Meaco. The largest however and the most memorable to Christians is Nangasaki, a city watered with the blood of Martyrs.

It is impossible to say with certainty who was the first Apostle of Japan. When the first

Jesuit missionaries penetrated into the interior they found undeniable evidences of ancient Christianity. They also found a rosary and a relic of the true cross. A Dominican missionary who died for the faith arrived in Japan in 1530. St. Francis Xavier landed in 1549 and labored two years, converting many natives and meriting the title of Apostle of Japan. The Franciscans followed in 1593.

The first general martyrdom was in 1597, when six Franciscans, three Japanese Jesuits, and fifteen natives of the Third Order of St. Francis gave their lives for the faith. They were canonized by Pius IX. in 1862.

Two or three years previous to this martyrdom the Jesuits asked assistance from the Dominicans of the Province of the Most Holy Rosary in the Philippine Islands, a Bull of Gregory XIII. giving Japan to the exclusive care of the Jesuits having been set aside in favor of the Franciscans. It was judged abrogated also in favor of the Dominicans. In 1617 the Dominican Provincial of the Philippines wrote to the King of Satzuma offering to send missionaries. This offer was accepted and some vessels were sent to carry

them to Japan. These Fathers were Blessed Francis de Morales, Father Thomas Fernandez, Blessed Alphonsus de Mena, Father Thomas of the Holy Ghost, accompanied by Brother John de la Abadia. They landed on the small island of Kosigi. The King showed them every mark of favor, and gave them a site for a church, which they built and dedicated to the Queen of the Most Sacred Rosary. He also gave full permission to build churches and monasteries in every part of his kingdom. Conversions became very numerous, seldom a day passing without some native asking the grace of baptism. The missionaries led a very austere life, observing all the rules of the Order with the strictest fidelity; so that the King gave them the name of "Xaninofin," which means "Men who despise this world and desire only to labor for the salvation of souls."

Despite this fair beginning difficulties arose; the native priests or bonzes became jealous, the Emperor suspicious, and the King of Satzuma alarmed. At one time he summoned them to Court from curiosity, at another they were banished to distant islands, where they

were thrown on the charity of fishermen for food and clothing. But in all their trials they placed their hopes in the intercession of the Queen of the Most Holy Rosary, and most zealously propagated the confraternity. They built churches in Macao, the imperial city, Omura, Nangasaki, and other cities, but their chief labors and greatest successes were in the kingdom of Figen.

They were in time joined by several other Dominican Fathers: in 1607 by Father John of the Angels, in 1609 by Father John of St. Thomas, Blessed Hyacinth Orphanel, and a lay brother. Blessed Alphonsus Navarette and Father Dominic Valderama arrived in 1611, and Father Balthazzer Fort in quality of Vicar General of the Missions in 1612.

It was about this period that the Dutch and English Protestants arrived in Japan. A Dutch ship having been wrecked on the coast, the captain, William Adams, an Englishman, asked permission from the Emperor Cubo-Sama to build another. A Spanish pilot seeing that shipwrecks were caused by rocks near the shore began to survey the coast. Cubo-Sama demanded of the English captain

if it was the custom in Europe to sound ports in strange lands, and was told that it was always considered a cause for declaring war, and insinuated that the Spaniards had some warlike designs on Japan; that it was their custom to send missionaries as spies into all parts of the world, for which reason many European sovereigns had banished Catholic priests as enemies of the public peace from their dominions. This was sufficient. In 1614 a decree of persecution was promulgated, ordering all the missionaries to leave Japan. The churches were destroyed, and the Christians ordered to renounce their faith under penalty of death. Nearly all the missionaries were driven out of the country, a few only remaining in concealment. The Emperor having died, his son, Xogan-Sama, who succeeded him, gave orders to the King of Omura to persecute the Christians. Blessed Peter of the Assumption, a Franciscan priest, and Blessed John Baptist Tavora, a Jesuit missionary, were beheaded May 22nd, 1617.

Soon after this martyrdom Blessed Alphonsus Navarette, now Vicar General of the Dominicans in Japan, arrived in Omura from

Nangasaki. He was a man full of zeal for souls. "One of his usual occupations," says Charlvoix in his history of Japan, "was to pick up in the streets the children abandoned by their parents on account of poverty. He caused them to be educated by charitable Christians, and opened the gates of heaven to a very large number by baptizing those who were on the point of death." His love for the poor was no less tender, and he founded a confraternity for the relief of their wants. It was he who established the Dominican confraternities of the Rosary and the Holy Name of Jesus in Japan.

As soon as he heard of the glorious martyrdom of Blessed Peter and John Baptist at Omura he determined to take their place and minister to the spiritual wants of the Christians left without priests. He was accompanied by an Augustinian, Blessed Ferdinand, and two natives, his host, Blessed Gaspard Ficogiro and Blessed Paul a catechist. He appointed Blessed Francis de Moralez to take his place during his absence. After traveling about nine miles the missionaries came to a village where the Fathers spent

nearly the whole night hearing confessions, and so many came to the sacraments that they were obliged to remain two days. The Lord of the village, an apostate Christian, returned to the faith, in which he persevered until death. Continuing their journey they came in four days to Nangoia, the port whence they were to sail to Omura. As they walked along the road Christians thronged around them, and they were obliged to preach, hear confessions, and administer Holy Communion in the open air. When the Christians at Nangoia saw the Fathers in their religious habits they could not restrain their joy. In the evening three ships sailed into the harbor crowded with soldiers sent by the King of Omura to arrest the missionaries. Nearly all the soldiers were apostate Christians, but when they saw the Fathers they threw themselves at their feet and begged forgiveness for the part they were forced to take in their arrest. Blessed Gaspard Ficogiro and Blessed Paul begged hard to be arrested, but they were left behind. Two native Christians were taken prisoners with the missionaries, John and Thomas by name, the latter a boy

of fifteen who served Blessed Alphonsus' Mass.

An immense crowd followed the captives to the ships, wails of grief rent the air, and the disconsolate Christians sorrowfully embraced their beloved missionaries, and cut so many pieces from their habits they found themselves almost without clothing. When the ships set sail so many swam after them and managed to board the vessel on which the Fathers were being taken away, that it was in danger of foundering, and they were obliged to be transferred to another ship. They landed in Omura in the middle of the night, when the King gave orders at once for their speedy execution, for he was anxious to prove his obedience to the Emperor's wishes. He commanded that the Fathers should be beheaded on the small desert island of Usuxima, and forbade all ships to leave the harbor until after the execution; but in spite of all vigilance the Christians followed in small boats and landed on the island; many desired to go to confession, among whom was Magdalen, the King's grandmother, and Mary his aunt. The executioners put the Fathers on board ship

again, and after sailing from one island to another, came at last to the rocky island of Taxasima.

When the hour of death came Blessed Alphonsus knelt down, Blessed Ferdinand at one side and a young native Christian, Blessed Leo Tanaca, on the other. Blessed Ferdinand was the first to die. He lovingly kissed the hand that was to strike off his head, a joyful smile illumined his face, and his soul was absorbed in contemplation of the heavenly bliss he was so soon to enjoy. His executioner took aim; he fell backward, his neck half severed and his face fixed on heaven. Three strokes were necessary to free his soul from its earthly tenement, and at last it took its heavenward flight.

Blessed Alphonsus suffered next. He too knelt in prayer, awaiting with joy the moment of his triumph, holding his beloved rosary and a blessed candle in his hands. He continued in prayer until the sword fell and his blessed soul fled to heaven. Little Leo was beheaded at one blow; June 1st, 1617.

The veneration shown toward the relics of these intrepid witnesses to the faith by the native converts was exceedingly great and

touching. Pieces of linen were steeped in their blood, their habits were cut into small pieces, which were carefully preserved as priceless treasures, and the sword that struck off their heads was purchased and sent as a precious relic to the Dominicans at Manilla. Their holy bodies were put into coffins, heavily weighted and thrown by the soldiers into the ocean.

For the next five years Blessed Thomas Zumarraga ministered to the Christians at Nangasaki, Nangoia, and Omura; but he too was arrested, and martyred at Omura in 1622. Blessed John of St. Dominic entered Japan in 1618, was imprisoned in December of the same year, and died of ill-treatment March 19th, 1619. His fellow-prisoners, who regarded him as a saint, preserved part of his body as a precious relic; the soldiers threw the rest into the sea after vainly attempting to burn it.

Father Didacus Collado reached the country in 1619, and found the Church in mourning, and numbers of Christians in prison. Blessed Alphonsus de Mena with several Christians was taken prisoner, March 14th, 1619; and on the following day Blessed Francis de Mor-

ales, successor to Blessed Alphonsus Navarette as Vicar General of the Dominicans in Japan, was captured with several native converts. Eight days afterwards these captive Fathers were taken to the island of Yuguinoxima, in the kingdom of Firando, where they were confined in a prison six feet long and a foot and a half wide. The walls were made of stakes, and the window was so small that they could scarcely see the sky; a fearful odor made it well-nigh insupportable and their only food was rice, soup made of the leaves of radishes, and sometimes as an extraordinary favor a salt herring. Blessed Alphonsus de Mena soon fell sick, when a profound melancholy to which he was subject attacked him, but the happiness of being allowed to say Mass and the hope of martyrdom soon dissipated the clouds that gathered around his soul. The two Fathers remained in this narrow prison for five months, after which they were taken to a still more fearful place of confinement in Omura, where they remained until the Great Martyrdom in 1622.

While the prisons were filled with priests the native Christians gave noble testimony to

the faith. The Brothers and Sisters of the Third Order of St. Dominic and the Members of the Confraternity of the Rosary deserve the first mention; and it would require volumes to do full justice to the bravery and constancy of these heroic souls. The Dominican Father, Francis Carrero, in his pious work, "The triumph of the Holy Rosary in Japan," tells us that before the establishment of this devotion the progress of Christianity was very slow, and that the converts were wanting in courage, but that after it became the favorite devotion everything changed, the Church made rapid progress, and the courage of the Christians increased in proportion as the persecution raged more furiously.

The first martyrs given to the Church by the Rosary Confraternity in Japan were Blessed Gerpard Ficogiro, Blessed Andrew Joxida, Blessed Dominic Yamaguchi and his son Blessed Thomas. In a moment of weakness Dominic had apostatized, but nobly expiated his crime by shedding his blood for Christ, October 1st, 1617. A celebrated apostate, Lin Timonauga, who had persecuted the Christians like St. Paul, was converted and be-

headed November 4th of the same year. Whole families died for the faith. Andrew Tocuan was a man of the highest birth and a personal friend of the Emperor. One of his sons had been ordained priest, and was killed while hearing the confessions of soldiers during a battle. Three other sons, Blessed John, Peter, and Paul, were beheaded in November, 1619, and Andrew himself after banishment to an island, was also beheaded about the same time. Another of his sons, who lived with Blessed Francis de Morales, was taken prisoner with him and after three months' imprisonment was condemned to be burned alive with a Jesuit Lay Brother, Blessed Leonard Kimura, and three members of the Rosary Confraternity, Blessed Cosmo Taguea, Blessed John Xoum and Blessed Dominic Giorgi. This cruel sentence was put into execution, November 19th, 1619. Andrew Tocuan's wife Mary entered the Third Order of St. Dominic, and died for the faith in the Great Martyrdom.

Blessed Bartholomew Xiki and ten other Rosarians were martyred on November 29th of the same year, and Blessed Simon Quiota, his wife Blessed Magdalen, and Blessed James

were crucified with heads downward August 16th, 1620.

Blessed Joachim, a Japanese who lived in Manilla, accompanied by Blessed Peter de Zuniga, a Mexican Augustinian priest, and Blessed Louis Flores of the Order of St. Dominic, sailed for Japan in 1620 and were captured by a Dutch ship and landed in that country on the Feast of St. Dominic. The captain, desirous of gaining the favor of the King of Firando, sent him word that he had taken captive two Catholic priests, and as soon as they landed they were banished to the island of Yuguinoxima. The Governor of Nangasaki having received strict orders from the Emperor to put all the Christian prisoners in Firando, Suzata, and Nangasaki to death, Blessed Joachim, Blessed Louis, and Blessed Peter were burned alive head downwards, and the captain of the ship, the sailors, and Blessed Joachim were beheaded. One of the sailors, Blessed Michael Diaz, was a member of the Third Order of St. Dominic, and the others were associates of the Confraternity of the Rosary. The Fathers and Blessed Joachim suffered a protracted agony for two hours, for

as the fire came too near the executioners removed it a little so as to prolong their sufferings; August 19th, 1623. The body of Blessed Louis Flores was carried to the house of a widow, and afterwards sent to the Dominican Fathers in Manilla.

Soon afterwards thirty Christian men, women and children were taken out of the prisons and beheaded, and twenty-eight others from the prison of Omura were burned alive. Of these the greater part were Jesuits, Franciscans and Dominicans. The Dominican priests were Blessed Angelus Orsucchi, Blessed Francis de Morales, Blessed Alphonsus de Mena, Blessed Hyacinth Orphanel, and Blessed Joseph of St. Hyacinth; also three Dominican catechists, who made the irreligious profession in the Order while in prison, Blessed Alexis, Thomas and Dominic.

In this martyrdom, which is called the Great Martyrdom, counting the thirty martyrs who were beheaded at Nangasaki, there were eighty-eight who gave their lives as a testimony to the faith; thirty beheaded, twenty-five burned to death, and thirty-three who died by the sword.

The prison in Omura in which the thirty martyrs were confined was much too small, and the contracted space caused them very great sufferings; but their religious fervor changed it into a monastery of observance. The priests said Mass every day, the Office of Matins was said at midnight, after which a meditation was made and the discipline taken. The "Salve Regina" was sung every evening in honor of the holy Mother of God, and the Rosary was recited day and night almost without ceasing. When the long-expected time came all the prisoners were taken from Omura to Nangasaki in a small ship, and on their arrival were mounted on horseback for the rest of the journey. Thousands of native Christians lined the way to see them pass. The place of martyrdom was on a hill near the ocean within easy distance of Nagasaki. First walked Mary de Fingo, of the Third Order of St. Dominic, carrying the cross, then women and children joyously singing hymns, among whom were Blessed Mary Tocuan, clad in white habit; Agnes of Corea, also of the Third Order; Catharine de Fingo, Prioress of the Confraternities of the Rosary and Holy Name of Jesus;

Blessed Mary de Fingo and her two sons, Blessed John, fifteen, and Blessed Peter, three years of age; Blessed Thecla, wife of Blessed Paul Nangayaxi, with their son, Blessed Peter, seven years of age; Blessed Elizabeth Fernandez, a Japanese, wife of the martyr Dominic Giorgi, with Blessed Ignatius, their son, only six years of age; Blessed Marina; Blessed Appolinaria, a widow; Blessed Clare, wife of Blessed Dominic Xamanda; Blessed Magdalen, and last of all Peter, a child of four, son of John Mateyama.

Following these heroic women and children came the members of the Rosary Confraternity, Dominic Chiamgo, a young man of nineteen; Blessed Damian Jamachi and his son, Michael, five years old; Blessed Clement Vom, and Blessed Antony, his son, two years of age; Blessed Bartholomew; Blessed Dominic Xamanda; Dominic of Omura, a boy of seven; Thomas of Caratza, and others whose names are unknown; all ready and glad to die for the faith.

As soon as they reached the summit of the hill the signal for execution was given. Twenty-five stakes had been prepared for those

who were to die by fire. The martyrs ran in holy haste, and threw their arms around them to show their joy. Those who were to be beheaded knelt with their eyes turned towards heaven, awaiting the moment of their blessed entrance into eternity. As soon as their sentence had been carried out their heads were placed on posts face to face with those who were to be burned to death, and when this was done the fires were lighted. The stakes were arranged so that death would come slowly. When the flames began to reach the bodies, two natives, breaking from their stakes, ran by the soldiers to strike off their heads and end their sufferings. Blessed Paul Nangayaxi followed them and exhorted them to bear the pain bravely. "A little courage. By God's assistance. Come and die with us for the love of Jesus," he said, and then returned to his own place, where he died. The soldiers offered the poor men the alternative of apostasy, but they refused and died at the stakes, to which they returned.

Wonders happened at this glorious martyrdom. Blessed Francis de Morales was seen walking in the flames as if to defy them; and

Blessed Angelus Orsucchi was raised aloft in mid air. Some of the martyrs lingered three hours, and Blessed Hyacinth Orphanel nearly a whole day. When there was no longer any sign of life in the charred bodies, guards were stationed at every approach to the mountain, and they were left exposed for three days. The Christians lingered around, hoping to obtain some relics; and one of them who succeeded in penetrating into the inclosure under cover of the night, was taken prisoner, and having firmly refused to deny the faith, was burned to death. At the end of three days what remained of the bodies was again burned, after which the ashes were put into sacks and thrown into the ocean. This martyrdom, one of the most glorious in the history of the Church, took place September 10th, 1622.

On the following day Blessed Gaspard Cotenda, a young man of the royal family of Firando, twenty-one years of age, with eleven members of the Third Order of St. Dominic, were beheaded at Nangasaki; and the next day Blessed Thomas Zumarraga, a priest of the First Order, and his companions, Blessed Mancius and Blessed Dominic, both native

Tertiaries, were burned alive with a Franciscan priest and two others of the same Order. Their ashes were likewise cast into the sea.

On the feast of the Most Holy Rosary, October 1st, Blessed Louis Yakiki; his wife, Blessed Lucy, and their two children, Blessed Andrew, aged eight, and Blessed Francis, four years of age, with Blessed Andrew, Mancius, Thomas, and Cosmo, were put to death. Blessed Louis was one of the most heroic of the Japanese martyrs. He suffered seventeen kinds of tortures and was at last condemned to be burned alive. The bleeding heads of his wife and children were thrust before his eyes as he was consumed by fire, but he did not flinch and cried out joyously, "Long live Jesus and Mary"; and after suffering more than an hour of excrutiating pain he finally gave his blessed soul into the hands of his Creator.

There remained now in Japan only three Dominicans; all their companions had died for the faith. One of the three, Blessed Peter Vasquez, after heroic labors, was taken prisoner as he was burying the body of Blessed Louis Flores. After two months' imprisonment at

Nangasaki he was sent to Omura, where he passed fourteen months and almost died from hunger and sickness. In the some prison there were two Franciscan priests, a Jesuit and a native Christian. All were burned to death, August 25th, 1624.

While Blessed Peter Vasquez was in prison at Omura four Dominicans were on their way to Japan; one died on the journey, and the others arrived in the empire July 19th, 1623. They were Fathers Dominic Erquica, Luke, and Blessed Louis Exarch, nephew of Saint Louis Betrand, the Dominican Apostle of South America. After three years of incessant labors Blessed Louis was taken prisoner with two lay-brothers, Blessed Peter and Blessed Mancius, and their hostess, Blessed Martha, a Dominican Tertiary. All four were burned to death, July 29th, 1627.

Blessed Dominic Castalet evangelized the kingdoms of Omura, Arima, Firando, and Nangasaki for seven years, but was at length captured and taken to Nangasaki, where he found two Dominican lay-brothers, and twenty-three professed Tertiaries. Their prison was a home of sanctity; after an hour spent in holy

meditation at midnight, they arose again at four in the morning and remained in prayer until six, when Mass was said and all received holy communion. Dinner, such as it was, was taken at noon; Vespers, Complin and the Litany of the Blessed Virgin at three, Meditation and Matins at half past five, after which all examined their conscience and many took the discipline. Blessed Thomas Castalet, with two native lay-brothers, Blessed Thomas and Blessed Antony, were burned alive, September 8th, 1628; their companions in prison met the same fate at different times.

At the General Chapter of the Dominican Order held at Toulouse in 1628 it was decided to send as many missionaries as possible to Japan. Father Thomas of St. Hyacinth, and Father John de Rueda arrived for the second time in 1629, and were both beheaded in the island of Lion Kion. In the year following, Father Hyacinth Esquivel, and a Franciscan Father, set sail for Japan, but were killed before landing. Father Dominic de Erquicia, two native Dominican priests, Francis and James, their catechist Michael Quiboze, Father Luke of the Holy Ghost, Father Jordan of St. Stephen,

two Tertiaries, Marina and Magdalen, and four other Dominicans died for the faith in 1633.

Fathers William Courtet, Michael Ozarata, Antony Gonzales, and Vincent, a native priest with two secular persons were captured soon after their arrival in 1637, and beheaded after fearful tortures, September 27th, 1637.

In 1638 the Christians, who numbered nearly forty thousand, driven to desperation, took up arms in defence of their religion, but were speedily overcome by the imperial troops aided by the Dutch navy, and were butchered by thousands; and the Christians were forced to hide themselves if they wished to keep the faith. In 1640 the Portuguese Ambassador was put to death in Nangasaki, and a decree issued condemning to death any Christian who dared to set foot in Japan. Five Dominicans attempted, but unsuccessfully, to enter the country, and five Jesuits who made a landing in 1642 were captured and executed. In 1692 there were as many as fifty Christians in prison at Nangasaki; strict search was made for the disciples of Christ, and orders were given that any European who landed in the country would be required to trample on the

cross. The Dutch Protestants, to their shame, complied, and this sacrilegious custom remained in force until a treaty made between Holland and Japan in 1857 abolished it. A Sicilian priest landed in 1709, but was arrested and imprisoned in Yeddo. He converted many natives who visited him in prison, and after seven years' confinement was walled up in a cell four or five feet square and fed through a small opening until he died.

In 1846, Gregory the XVI. appointed a Vicar Apostolic of Japan, who finding it impossible to enter the country, took up his residence with some missionaries in the island of Lew-Chew. In 1856 two priests in capacity of interpreters of French frigates, made several excursions into the country, but were watched at every step by the native police, to hinder them from holding any communication with the natives. They succeeded in exchanging a few words with some native Christians, and found them animated with faith but in great fear of the government. Since 1854 Japan has entered into treaties with the United States, England, Russia and France, and freedom of worship was guaranteed in

1858 to foreign residents. Two years previous eighty native Christians were arrested in a village near Nangasaki, and thirty were put in prison. Ten died in prison and the others soon after their release, in consequence of the inhuman treatment they had received.

A Catholic church was built at Yokohama in 1861, and served by two priests. So many natives from all parts of the Empire visited the church that the government issued a decree prohibiting the Japanese from entering it. Many, however, disregarded the prohibition. The erection of another church at Nangasaki in 1863 caused a most wonderful discovery of large congregations of Japanese Christians who had preserved the faith since the times of persecution. Fifteen natives went to the priest's house in 1865 and declared themselves Christians, and said that there were nearly thirteen hundred in their native village. On Holy Thursday and Good Friday fifteen hundred visited the church, and in the month of May three thousand confessions were heard. In the same month deputies arrived from an island, who assured the missionaries that there were Christians in every part of Japan, and as

many as a thousand families in one district. Among them was a catechist, who was very careful to assure himself that the Fathers were real priests. "Have you no children?" he said, and when he was told that they were celibates, he cried out joyfully, "They are virgins, thanks be to God." Within a month twenty Christian congregations made themselves known, and seven baptizers were sent to them. These faithful people had preserved intact the great truths of Christianity, had always been very devout to the Blessed Virgin, and had never ceased to recite the Holy Rosary.

In 1866 a Vicar Apostolic was consecrated at Hong Kong, where persecution again broke out; it soon came to an end however, owing to the energetic remonstrances of the representatives of European governments. A seminary for native ecclesiastical students has been established, and after so many years of persecution the future of the Church in Japan seems assured.

In June, 1862, the Holy See decreed the canonization of the martyrs of February 5th, 1597. The greater part of those martyred

between 1617 and 1628 were beatified by Pius IX. in 1869. Of the total number of two hundred and five, no less than one hundred and ten are counted among the saints of the Dominican Order. There were twelve priests, five choir brothers, and five lay brothers of the First Order, twenty-two Tertiaries, and sixty-four members of the Rosary Confraternity. The priests were :

Blessed Alphonsus Navarette, martyred in 1617. He made his profession in the Monastery of St. Paul in Valladolid.

Blessed John of St. Dominic, 1619. Born in old Castile. He received the habit in Salamanca.

Blessed Louis Flores, 1622. A native of Antwerp. He received the habit in Mexico and was Novice-master in that country and in Manilla.

Blessed Francis de Morales, 1622. Born in Madrid. He received the habit in Valladolid.

Blessed Angelus Orsucchi, 1622. A native of Lucca. He was a missionary in New Segoria and Batan, Vicar Provincial of Pangasinan, and Superior of the Vicariat of St. Hyacinth in Mexico.

Blessed Alphonsus de Mena, 1622. A son of the Monastery of Salamanca.

Blessed Joseph of St. Hyacinth, 1622. He made his profession at Ocaña.

Blessed Hyacinth Orphanel, 1622, of the Monastery of Barcelona.

Blessed Thomas Zumarraga, 1622, who took the habit in Victoria, his native town.

Blessed Peter Vasquez, 1624. A native of Galicia. He entered the order in Madrid.

Blessed Louis Bertrand Exarch, 1627. He made his profession in Barcelona, in which city he was born.

Blessed Dominic Castalet, 1628. An Arragonian who took the habit in Barcelona.

The Clerics of the First Order were Blessed Alexius, Thomas, Dominic, Mancius and Dominic.

The Lay Brothers were Blessed Mancius, Peter, Thomas, Gaspard, and Antony, all natives of Japan.

The Brothers and Sisters of the Third Order were Blessed Bayo, Dominic Tomaki, Dominic Nifaki, Francis, Francisca, John Tomaki, John Imamura, Leo, Laurence, Lucy, Louis, Magdalen, Matthew, Michael Yamada,

Michael Tomaki, Michael Fimonaya, Paul, Romanus, Thomas, James, Paul Aybara, and Paul Fimonoya.

The sixty-four other martyrs belonged to the Rosary Confraternity.

The General Chapter of the Dominican Order held at Avila, May, 1895, commissioned the Master General of the Order to petition the Holy See for the beatification of Fathers Antony Gonzalez, William Courtet, Michael de Ozarata, and Vincent, the latter a native martyred in 1637; also for the completion of the process already commenced of Father Luke of the Holy Ghost, 1627.

BLESSED SADOC.

BLESSED SADOC,

AND FORTY-EIGHT COMPANIONS, MARTYRS.

June 2.

1260.

AMONG the students of the university of Bologna who were led by the personal influence of St. Dominic to enter the Order was a Slav, Sadoc by name, who soon after he had made his profession was sent by the General Chapter of 1221, under the leadership of Father Paul of Hungary, to found the Order in that country.

The little company of missionaries, five in number, set out on foot, preaching as they traveled along, and met with great success everywhere on their long journey. Coming to Lorenz in Carinthia, three of the brightest students in the town offered themselves as novices, thus increasing their number to eight.

What a power had the preaching of these holy men! A few unknown Friars arrive in a provincial town and begin to preach; three students go to hear them, their hearts are touched, they give up all to follow Christ, and leaving home and country go with preachers unknown to them but a week previous, on a mission which is to end in martyrdom! So has it been since the world was converted by the preaching of twelve poor men; not learning, not eloquence has changed the hearts of sinners, but self-denial, abnegation, and the example of a holy life animated by a spirit of self sacrifice and zeal for souls.

This was well known to the enemy of souls, for the first night the missionaries slept on the soil of Hungary Blessed Sadoc saw a multitude of evil spirits around him, who cried out in impotent rage, "You have come to take away from us our rights," and then turning towards the three young students they added in a bitter tone, "And by such as these!"

At first their success in Hungary was very small; the people were barbarous and taxed the patience of the missionaries to the utmost. But God was with them, they were bound to

succeed ; their earnest sermons, and the silent preaching of their holy lives gained the peoples' hearts and conversions became very frequent. They soon began to build monasteries in the larger cities and filled them with native religious chosen for their piety and talents. They also founded a community of Dominican Sisters, which flourished greatly and counted among its glories Blessed Helen of Hungary, and Blessed Margaret, daughter of King Bela IV.

After several years in Hungary Father Paul set out on a missionary expedition into Croatia, Slavonia, Transylvania, Wallachia, Bosnia, and Servia, for he could not rest as long as there were souls to save. The population of these countries was made up of pagans, heretics, and schismatics ; and the Catholics, who were in a very small minority, had in many cases yielded to evil example and had lost the purity of the faith. Zealous apostles were sadly needed. Blessed Paul and his companions worked marvels among them, and to perpetuate the good work founded several large Dominican monasteries, as he had already done in Hungary. After many years in missionary

labors in these countries he entered the land of the Cuman Tartars, now called Moldavia, a barbarous and exceedingly ferocious race. They soon drove him out; a few children baptized at the hour of death being the only fruits of his mission. Not a long time, however, elapsed before he returned, accompanied by several Fathers, and this time his success was all he could have desired; many converts were made, among whom was a prince called Brut, who, with his wife and family and as many as a thousand of his retainers, were baptized by Blessed Paul. Another influential convert was Prince Bernboch, whose example was soon followed by his wife and many of his subjects. Andrew, King of Hungary, the father of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, was his godfather.

The news of these happy events having reached Rome, Pope Gregory IX. addressed a Brief, July 31st, 1227, to the Archbishop of Strigonia, exhorting him to assist the Dominican missionaries in the conversion of the Cuman Tartars; and in another Brief to the same Prelate he appointed a Dominican to be Bishop among the newly converted people.

He also wrote a letter to Blessed Jordan of Saxony, Master General of the Dominican Order, to request him to send additional missionaries to aid in the good work. His request was immediately complied with, and with great success; the number of converts rapidly multiplied, churches and monasteries were built and peopled by native religious, who proved to be most valuable auxiliaries in the work of the conversion of their fellow-countrymen.

In the year 1241, Cuthen, King of the Cuman Tartars, sought an asylum in Hungary, and his flight proved to be his people's ruin; for as soon as he had fled his enemies overrun Cumania and Hungary, putting to death all who fell into their hands. Blessed Paul and one hundred and ninety Dominicans gave their lives for the faith during this fearful invasion. Blessed Sadoc was Prior of Sandomir at that time, and the approach of the Tartars was revealed to him by God, and he was warned that he and the forty-eight religious of the monastery would be called upon to die for the faith. On the day of their martyrdom, the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin

Mary, Bzovius tells us that when, after the midnight office, a novice, according to ancient monastic custom, went into the middle of the choir to read the Martyrology, or list of the martyrs of that day, he saw these words in letters of gold: "At Sandomir, the passion of forty-nine martyrs." He hesitated, for he thought his eyes deceived him; but summoning up his courage, he read the strange words in a loud and clear voice. Blessed Sadoc knew well what it meant, and the Fathers and Brothers could be hardly less certain of the meaning; for there were forty-nine in the community and they knew the precious grace God was about to bestow upon them. After the divine office Blessed Sadoc spoke to the community in earnest words, congratulated them on the happiness of the speedy entrance into heaven that awaited them, and bade them prepare for the sacrifice that God required from them that day. "It is a heavenly warning," he said. "These words divinely written are not placed before our eyes in vain. The Author of life and death invites us to a happier life and a never-ending immortality." But no exhortation was necessary, all

were eager to die for God; their only anxiety was to prepare their souls for a holy death. They went at once to confession and received Holy Communion, and made every act of the day a preparation for death.

It was evening before the Tartars entered the city, and the Fathers and Brothers were chanting the Salve Regina after Complin, according to Dominican custom, when the savages burst into the church. In a few moments the pavement ran with blood, and while the white robed martyrs sang the words "*Eia ergo advocate nostra*," "Turn then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy towards us," their happy souls entered into eternal bliss.

The exact date of their martyrdom is uncertain. Touron thinks it was in 1241, during the first Tartar invasion, when Blessed Paul and his companions died for the faith; Bzovius, however, is inclined to the opinion that is was in 1260, during the second invasion. These glorious martyrs were beatified by Pius VII. Their names were:

Priests.

Bd. Sadoc, Prior.
Bd. Paul, the Vicar.
Bd. James, Novice Master.
Bd. Abel, Procurator.
Bd. Simon.
Bd. Clement.
Bd. Barnabas.
Bd. Elias.
Bd. Bartholomew.
Bd. Luke.
Bd. Matthew.
Bd. John.
Bd. Philip.
Bd. Malachy.
Bd. Andrew.
Bd. Peter.

Deacons.

Bd. Joachim.
Bd. Joseph.
Bd. Stephen.

Sub Deacons.

Bd. Thadeus.
Bd. Moses.
Bd. Abraham.
Bd. Basil.

Clerics.

Bd. David.
Bd. Aaron.
Bd. Benedict.
Bd. Onuphrius.
Bd. Dominic.
Bd. Michael.
Bd. Matthew.
Bd. Maurus.
Bd. Timothy.

Novices.

Bd. Gordien.
Bd. Felicien.
Bd. Mark.
Bd. John.
Bd. Gervaise
Bd. Christopher.
Bd. Donatus.
Bd. Medard.
Bd. Valentine.
Bd. Daniel.
Bd. Tobias.
Bd. Macarius.
Bd. Raphael.
Bd. Isaias.

Lay Brothers.

Bd. Cyril.
Bd. Jeremias.
Bd. Thomas.

BLESSED DIANA D'ANDALO.

BLESSED DIANA D'ANDALO,

AND HER COMPANIONS,

BB CECILIA AND AMANDA,

OF THE SECOND ORDER.

June 9.

1236.

WE read in the primitive chronicles of the Dominican Order that when our Fathers first established themselves in the city of Bologna, in 1218, it soon became necessary to obtain more spacious buildings, and that through the intervention of Cardinal Ugolino, the Bishop of Bologna gave them the church of St. Nicolas in the vineyards. But the patronage of this church was vested in the noble and powerful family of d'Andalo, one of the richest and most influential in the north of Italy; they

also owned the land round the church, and refused either to sell it or to give up their right of patronage over the church.

This noble family, so tenacious of its privileges, was destined to give the Dominican Order a more noble treasure. Diana d'Andalo was to be the means in the hands of God for establishing the Fathers at St. Nicolas, and at the same time to be the founder of the Second Order of Sisters in Bologna, and to become one of the noblest in heart and mind of the many illustrious women the Dominican Order was to claim as its own.

This young and beautiful lady went to hear Blessed Reginald of Orleans preach; and, like so many others, soon fell under the singular charm of his sanctity and eloquence. She was deeply moved, and, as says the chronicle of St. Agnes' Convent in Bologna, "began to despise the pomps and vanities of the world, and to seek the society of the Friar Preachers more and more." By her influence arrangements were soon made between her father and the Dominicans, by which the latter obtained the church of St. Nicolas, and land around it on which to build a monastery.

In 1219, St. Dominic, coming to Bologna, Diana, says the same ancient chronicle, "began to love him with all the affection of her heart, and to confer with him about the salvation of her soul." Until then she had no definite aim in life, and her vocation had been unknown to her. Her parents had intended her to marry a scion of the illustrious family of Salinguerra, but from some reason not recorded, the engagement had been broken off. Listening to the words of golden wisdom which fell from Blessed Reginald's lips, she conceived a desire to give herself to God alone, and asked admittance into a community of Nuns. Notwithstanding her piety and noble rank she was refused. Thus, with no attachment to earthly things, she was yet in complete darkness as to her future. As soon as she consulted St. Dominic her doubts and fears vanished, and her future became clear. "After a few days," says the chronicle, "Diana put herself entirely into Blessed Dominic's hands, and made her profession at the foot of the altar of St. Nicolas in the presence of Master Reginald, Brother Guala of Brescia, Brother Rodolph, and several noble ladies who are yet alive." It was not

uncommon in those days to take religious vows in this way. It was done by Master Moneta at Bologna, and by Blessed Jordan of Saxony and Henry of Cologne at Paris. It was a real vow to enter religion, but at some future time. Diana promised not merely to enter a religious order, but, moreover, to become a Dominican Sister, like those St. Dominic had already founded at Prouille, in the south of France, and Madrid in Spain, and which he was soon to establish in Rome. "Diana," says the chronicle, "had promised Blessed Dominic to build a house which would bear the name of the Order and belong to it." Pending the time when her promise could be fulfilled she remained under the vow of obedience to St. Dominic, although it was known but to a few chosen friends. No outward change was seen in her. She dwelt in her father's house, lived as before on delicate food and in the midst of every luxury; but beneath her rich and costly attire she wore an iron chain, and spent her time with monastic regularity, although she seemed to devote as much of her leisure moments as formerly to society duties, and to the companionship of her rel-

atives and friends. Even at this period of her life she fulfilled the Dominican vocation of saving souls, and silently but no less surely, won many noble ladies to devotion towards the Order. "There was a kind of emulation," says the chronicle of St. Agnes, "as to who should assist the Brothers, and multiply in their favor marks of confidence and veneration."

Two years passed away thus; long years to the noble girl who, all on fire with heavenly love, was consumed with an ardent desire to dedicate herself to God in holy religion. In the year 1221, St. Dominic, now rapidly approaching the term of his mortal life, came again to Bologna, and held a General Chapter of the Order at the end of May, after which he went to Venice to found a monastery there; and returned towards the end of July for the last time. He was not to live to see Diana's wishes fulfilled. Many difficulties were yet to be overcome. "Diana," the chronicle again speaks, "did not forget her vow. She had conferences with the Blessed Father on the means to carry it out. On his part Blessed Dominic called the Friars to-

gether and asked them if they agreed to the project of establishing a convent at Bologna. All the Friars having had liberty to explain their sentiments, the saint said, 'For the present I will take neither side; I am going to consult the Lord. To-morrow you will hear my answer.' Having prayed all night, he called the Brothers together again, and said, 'We must build a convent for sisters at all costs, even if it should be necessary to interrupt the building of our own monastery,' and because he was about to leave Bologna, he charged four Brothers to watch over the preliminaries of the undertaking; to wit, Brother Paul of Hungary, Brother Guala, afterwards Bishop of Brescia, Brother Ventura of Bologna, and Brother Rodolph of Faenza." They set to work at once. They thought they had found a favorable site, but the Bishop objected to a church being built there, being, in his opinion, too near the city.

Thus Blessed Diana, who fondly thought she was at last on the verge of seeing her long cherished desires accomplished, was as far as ever from it. She determined to take an extreme step. "On the day of the Feast of

St. Magdalen," continues the old chronicle, "Diana made known that it was her intention to visit the convent of Ronzano, situated in the hills outside the town. She went in great state, and with a brilliant *cortége*, in which were many noble ladies. Arrived at the convent, she went all alone into the dormitory and asked for the habit, which was immediately granted her. But those in her train sent messengers to Bologna to announce the event. At this news a large number of men and women, relatives, and friends, ran to Ronzano, and Diana saw herself dragged from her asylum with such violence that one of her sides was bruised. As long as she lived she kept the traces of her wound. Taken back to her father's house she remained sick for more than a year. But Blessed Dominic was back again in Bologna. Diana's resolution had rejoiced his heart; the check she had received affected him greatly. Not being able to see her except in the presence of witnesses, he wrote to her to strengthen her. After this he passed to eternal joy. As for Diana, captive in the house of her father according to the flesh, to lose her father according to the

spirit was the full measure of her trial. But Almighty God, Who had chosen her before the creation of the world, did not abandon her, and scattered the obstacles that opposed the execution of her designs."

She was not to remain long without a spiritual guide. Blessed Jordan of Saxony was to take St. Dominic's place, and to lead her to a happy end of all her trials. He had not yet succeeded to the headship of the Dominican Order, but as Provincial of Lombardy had full power to continue the good work of founding a convent of Sisters in Bologna. "Master Jordan," says the chronicle, "at that time Provincial of Lombardy, gave Diana faithful assistance. In concert with the four Brothers appointed by Blessed Dominic, he set himself to search for a place where the erection of a church could raise no difficulties on the Bishop's part. The place he chose was until then called St. Peter's valley; from the time of building the convent it bore the name of St. Agnes' mountain. The Bishop's agreement having been obtained, they proceeded without delay to build a very humble and very small house."

Blessed Jordan was now called away to attend the General Chapter in 1222. During his absence Diana, "having regained some strength," (we are again quoting the words of the chronicle), "profited by it to fly to Ronzano again on the night of All Saints. Her parents, despairing of keeping her, no longer dreamed of doing violence to her. She dwelt in that convent until the Feast of the Ascension. Then Father Jordan, Master of the Order, with the other Brothers, that is to say, Brother Guala, Brother Ventura of Verona, Brother Rodolph of Faenza, Brother Bernard the Teuton, and others also, led Diana and four noble young ladies of Bologna into the little house. That took place during the octave of the Ascension and on the Feast of the Apostles Peter and Paul, 1223. The Sisters immediately received the habit of the Order from the hands of the Father Master Jordan. A few days afterwards two noble ladies of Ferrara joined themselves to them, having been moved to do so by the preaching of Brother Bernard the Teuton."

Forgetting the immense load of the government of the whole Order which pressed

heavily on his shoulders, Blessed Jordan set himself most carefully to watch over Diana and the little community of Sisters. His letters, many of which are happily preserved, are full of proofs of his care for her and her convent. The chronicle of St. Agnes says, "One can judge by the letters which the Master of the Order wrote to Sister Diana and the other members of his college of virgins, of his love and devotedness towards them in all their necessities and tribulations."

He sent Blessed Guala and Brother Rodolph to Rome, to obtain some of the Sisters who had been trained in the spirit of St. Dominic himself, so that they could inspire the new community with the same spirit. But Pope Honorius III., zealous for the welfare of a convent likely to do so much good in Rome, would not hear of any of the Sisters of St. Sixtus being taken away. Blessed Jordan then sought assistance from the convent at Prouille, the first founded by St. Dominic. He wrote to the Sisters of St. Agnes in 1224, "Our dear Sisters are coming from Prouille; the Prior of Montpellier has taken care to let me know." Hearing of this the Pope with-

drew his opposition to the departure of some of the Sisters of St. Sixtus, and ordered that four of the best should immediately set off for Bologna; influenced very much in the matter by the advice of Cardinal Ugolino. Accordingly four Sisters were sent to Bologna, and, as the chronicle tells us, "dwelt there, holy and valiant daughters, until the end of their days. One of them was Sister Cecilia, who lives at the present hour, and who assisted at the resurrection of the nephew of the Lord Cardinal Stephen, to whom Blessed Dominic gave back his life. The preaching of the Brothers in Lombardy and the Marches converted many noble ladies, who they took care should enter at St. Agnes, so that the number of Sisters rapidly increased."

When Sister Cecilia and her three companions arrived in Bologna, Diana resigned her office as Prioress to Blessed Cecilia; but she was always looked up to as the mother of the community, and was consulted when any important affair was to be decided.

We will now end this brief notice of this great servant of God and child of St. Dominic, in the words of the chronicle we have so

often quoted. "After having lived thirteen years in the Order, this Sister, agreeable to God, and venerated by men, slept happily in the Lord. (June 10th, 1236.) All the community, and the Prior and Brothers of Bologna, assembled at her funeral, and laid her precious remains with all fitting honors in a wooden coffin near the altar of St. Agnes. It would be hard to say what was the public grief, what above all things was the Sisters' and Brothers' sorrow on the occasion of her loss. This blessed woman had made herself venerated for her deep wisdom and eloquence. She was beautiful in features, full of grace in her outward person, amiable to all. The integrity of her life was conformable to her outward appearance, full of attraction. Devoted to the divine service, faithful in prayer, adorned with everything that could nourish piety, the sight of her caused tears of feeling. She loved the Brothers and the whole Order with a great love. She cherished abjection, kept all the poorest habits for herself, and, above all, was zealous in practising and causing others to practise, the holy hardships of the religious life. Without mentioning others, such were

the spiritual ornaments of this Sister, the worthy spouse of Jesus Christ."

Seventeen years after her death her remains were translated to the church of a new convent built in Bologna, and placed under the High Altar. In 1510, the church was repaired, and during the work her relics were found with those of Blessed Cecilia and Amanda. A miracle distinguished her relics from those of the other Sisters. They were placed in an urn and sealed. Another translation took place 1584. The church was profaned in 1796, and completely destroyed in 1819. The relics of Blessed Diana were dispersed, but her cultus never died out; so dear was the memory of her virtues to the faithful people. Several years ago the Dominican Fathers of Bologna recovered part of the altar of St. Agnes, on which Fontana, an artist of the Bolognese school of painting, had represented Diana making her profession in the hands of St. Dominic. A wealthy citizen, having become possessed of the casket which contained her ashes, deposited it in the ancient church of the Convent at Ronzano. Her head now reposes in the Chapel of St. Dominic in the Basilica in

Bologna, under a gilded canopy near the tomb of her spiritual father.

Blessed Cecilia was of the noble Roman family of Frangipani or Malabranca, and received the habit from the hands of St. Dominic in the convent of St. Sixtus in Rome, when only seventeen years of age. As we have already mentioned, she was one of the four Sisters sent from Rome to Bologna in the year 1224, and became the Prioress of that convent when Blessed Diana resigned that office. She was then twenty-three years of age. After several years she was relieved of this grave burden, and spent the rest of her long life in the perfect practice of every Christian virtue. It was she who left us the beautiful description of the personal appearance of St. Dominic and many details of his life and exalted virtue. "Sister Cecilia," says the chronicle, "has told us all that should be said about the Blessed Dominic, and has affirmed that it all is so true that she is ready, if necessary, to confirm it by oath. But this precaution is useless, for she is of such great holiness and religion that her words are believed without difficulty, and this is why Sister Angelica

of St. Agnes' Convent has written what she has heard her say, so that all may be for the glory of our Saviour Jesus Christ, of our Blessed Father Dominic, and for the consolation of the Brothers. You who read forgive the style, for she who writes does not know grammar."

"This relation," says Father Lacordaire, "with the legends of Blessed Jordan of Saxony, Constantine Medicis and Blessed Humbert, form the four principal primitive monuments of the life of St. Dominic." In 1280 Blessed Cecilia again supplied material for the new life of St. Dominic by Thierry of Apolda.

She died at the advanced age of eighty-nine in the year 1290, and was buried close to Blessed Diana, and always shared the veneration paid to her and Blessed Amanda. Of Blessed Amanda nothing is now known except the cultus paid to her.

BLESSED JOHN DOMINIC.

BLESSED JOHN DOMINIC.

June 10.

1350–1420.

"I SHOULD be convicted of ingratitude," says St. Antoninus, the great Dominican Archbishop of Florence, in his history of his archiepiscopal city, "if I should be found forgetful of this magnificent man, worthy of all praise, who attracted me to religion by his preaching. I am speaking of Blessed John Dominic of Florence, Cardinal of Ragusa, who shone in the Church of God by the word of knowledge, wisdom, and holiness of life, as well as by his rank."

Blessed John Dominic was born in Florence, 1350, of pious parents, who being very poor gave him but a scant education and set him to work to gain his livelihood by his own labors at a time of life when others of his own age

were still at school. He applied at the age of seventeen to enter the Dominican Order in the famous Monastery of Santa Maria Novella in Florence; but was declined on account of his defective education, and because it seemed to be his duty to support his parents. This and subsequent refusals did not discourage him; inspired with an ardent desire to sanctify himself and to devote his life to the salvation of souls, he looked upon difficulties as a trial of patience, and feeling conscious that God had given him a vocation to the religious life, he trusted that He would find a way for him to follow it. He therefore applied again and answered all objections so wisely that at length he was allowed to receive the beloved habit of the Order.

During his noviciate he was docile, obedient, more careful for the comfort of his fellow-novices than of his own, and soon gained an ascendency over his companions, and was universally looked upon as a model Dominican even by those advanced in years and virtue. His fine natural abilities cultivated by diligent application soon put him on an equality with those who had enjoyed a better education, and

drew upon him the admiration of the entire community. Above all he had a memory so perfect that he never forgot what he had once learned. He spent all his leisure hours in reading good books, more especially the Holy Scriptures. He gave his preference to the writings of the Christian Fathers, but by no means neglected the works of pagan antiquity. Thus he became not only a philosopher and a profound theologian, but a good mathematician and an authority in Canon Law. But what is most worthy of admiration is that he learned all he knew by his own efforts and was in truth a self-made man, "Like another St. Augustine," says St. Antoninus, "he taught himself and was able to understand all he read."

In the true spirit of monasticism he also employed himself in manual labor, and some richly illuminated choir books, preserved in the Monastery of St. Dominic in Fiesole, attest his diligence and artistic talent.

He was always and everywhere a preacher, and his sermons produced the effect that only the words of a saint can. He was especially successful in fostering religious vocations, and

so many entered the Order under his direction that when complaints were made in Tuscany to the secular authorities he was threatened with expulsion if he did not desist in his efforts. But he did not fear threats as he did not court favor; his patience and sweetness triumphed, opposition served only to increase his zeal, and in due time he had the consolation of knowing that his greatest opponents had become his fastest friends.

In proper time he was ordained priest, and when about twenty-five years of age began to preach. He had been afflicted from youth with an impediment in his speech, but this was cured through the intercession of St. Catharine of Siena. He sometimes preached as many as four or five times a day. Contrary to the bad taste of the age, he never quoted pagan authors in his sermons, but founded his doctrine on the Holy Scriptures, and illustrated it by quotations from the Fathers. He was compared as a preacher, and not unjustly, to St. Vincent Ferrer. His favorite subjects were the infinite mercy of God, the riches of grace, the divine origin and excellence of the Christian religion, and the contempt of the world for true moral-

ity. His sermons converted many sinners, the best proof of good preaching.

He was the founder of three celebrated Dominican communities; that of Fiesole near Florence, being the most important, an illustrious sanctuary which became the germ of a revival of primitive fervor and observance in many provinces. This foundation was the cherished work of his life. The ground on which this famous monastery was built was donated by the Bishop of Fiesole, a Dominican, who dedicated the church, assisted by two other Dominican Bishops, on the Feast of St. Dominic, 1405. Blessed John Dominic gave the habit the same day to four young men, one of whom was St. Antoninus, the glory of Florence. Two years afterwards he received into the Order two Brothers, the famous artist, Fra Angelico, and his scarcely less illustrious Brother, Fra Benedetto.

In a religious order destined by the providence of God to diffuse the light of truth in the world, art as well as preaching can contribute powerfully to raise the mind to heaven, and can become a powerful means of popularizing doctrine and of impressing the truths of

religion on the minds of the faithful, for Christian art is of its very nature a continual sermon, teaching the truths of faith. Blessed John Dominic understood this well, and never ceased to impress on the Dominican Fathers and Novices that the Friar Preacher, brush in hand, is as faithful to his vocation as when he stands in the pulpit to announce the word of God. The monasteries he founded had their illuminators to transcribe and decorate the choir books, and painters to charm the eyes and heart by their pictures. He was himself an artist of no mean order, and wherever he went inculcated the love of Christian art.

The other religious foundations he made were the famous convents of Dominican Sisters of Corpus Christi at Venice, and St. Peter in Florence. His pious mother entered the convent in Venice, and died there at an advanced age, and so many ladies of high rank were admitted into the community that although the convent was immense, it proved too small.

The relaxation of monastic discipline so often spoken of in the lives of the saints of the religious orders of this period, was the

effect of two great causes, the fearful plague in 1348 and following years, and the great schism of the West. We can gain some idea of the fearful havoc the plague worked in religious communities from one example taken from many. No less than seventy-seven Dominicans died of the plague in the Monastery of Santa Maria Novella in Florence in the space of four months. Those who had grown old in the service of God and those who remained at their post were the first to be carried off, while the survivors modified the austerities of the Rule to preserve the existence of the Order, and thus religious discipline became relaxed.

But that which contributed most to this deplorable result in the religious orders and also among the secular clergy, was the great schism that afflicted Christianity for so many years, and which opened the way to innumerable abuses. As Blessed John Dominic played a prominent part in bringing it to an end, a few words on its origin may not be out of place. On the death of Gregory XI., who had restored the Papacy to Rome after nearly seventy-two years of banishment at Avignon,

the Roman people demanded that the Cardinals should elect a native of the city to obviate all danger of again losing the Pope. The Conclave of Cardinals unanimously elected the Archbishop of Bari, a native of Naples, who took the name of Urban VI., April 10th, 1378. The new Pope did not agree with the Cardinals on many important questions, and would not hear of restoring the Papal Court to Avignon. In the same year fifteen of them, mostly French, met and elected an Antipope, Robert of Geneva, called Clement VII., alleging as their excuse that they were not free when they elected Urban VI. And thus began the great schism that lasted fifty years.

Sad as were the times, God had not abandoned His Spouse, and side by side with noxious weeds in the garden of the Church there blossomed many beautiful flowers of sanctity. There were holy Bishops and priests, saints in the religious orders and saintly men and women in the world. Blessed John Dominic was not the least illustrious, and seemed to be destined by God to be the means of providing a twofold remedy for the twin evils in the Church, by restoring monastic discipline, and

laboring successfully for the election of a Pope who was recognized as legitimate by both parties.

He was elected Prior of Pisa, Cortona and Fabriano, and Vicar Provincial of the Roman Province. According to St. Antoninus he was the first to commence the restoration of primitive observance in the Dominican Order in the Italian provinces, and began his difficult work in the Monastery of St. Dominic in Venice, which was soon followed by the restoration of strict discipline in the provinces of Lombardy, Rome, and Sicily. Difficult as is the rôle of ecclesiastical reformer, he was equal to its requirements, for he possessed all the necessary qualities—prudence, moderation, firmness, kindness, and personal example.

On the death of Pope Innocent VII., in 1406, he was sent by the city of Florence to Rome as Ambassador to the Conclave of Election, and on his arrival proposed to the Cardinals that the Pontiff who would be elected should renounce his rights as soon as such a renunciation would be necessary for the good of the Church. Gregory XII., who was well known to him, was elected on this condition, and volun-

tarily ratified his promise, protesting that he only wished for the peace of the Church, and when he gave audience to Blessed John Dominic as Ambassador of Florence, he spoke in no dubious words of his anxiety to put an end to the schism. Shortly afterwards the Pope sent a letter by a Dominican Father to Benedict XIII., inviting him to renounce the right he claimed, and proposed that the Cardinals of both parties should meet and elect a Pope to be recognized by all. Benedict answered that he was willing to do so, but this agreement was never carried out.

Blessed John Dominic remained in Rome, and was nominated Archbishop of Ragusa by Gregory XII. He endeavored to decline this honor, but finally accepted at the earnest desire of the Pope. He refused however to be consecrated, so that it would be easy for him to resign later on, and also because he foresaw that the Pope would keep him in Rome and that he would not be allowed to reside in his archiepiscopal city to watch over his people. The Pope next created him Cardinal, May 12th, 1407. He wrote to his sister that he had accepted "like Christ accepted his crown

of thorns." Gregory had promised not to create any new Cardinals so as to facilitate the reunion of Christendom, and the old Cardinals refused to recognize Blessed John Dominic, and those who were raised to the Cardinalate at the same time retired to Pisa, where with some of the Cardinals of the party of Benedict XIII., they convoked a Council, and having deposed both Popes elected Alexander V., June 26, 1409.

Blessed John Dominic never ceased to exhort Gregory to resign, and although he had received many honors from his hands, dared to speak boldly to him. "Most holy Father," he said, "it is not becoming to your age and reputation to refuse any longer to accede to the wishes of the faithful. The Church expects from you the love and the wisdom of a Father." Gregory's constant answer was that he would resign as soon as Benedict would do the same. Alexander V. died March 4, 1410, and John XXIII. was elected to succeed him by only sixteen Cardinals of his own party.

Blessed John Dominic continued to urge Gregory to resign, and was sent by him to the Emperor Sigismund, upon which a Council

was convoked to meet at Constance, November 5, 1414. In this Council John XXIII. was deposed; Gregory XII. commissioned Blessed John Dominic to give in his resignation, which was accepted; Benedict was deposed; and Otho Colonna was elected Pope, and took the name of Martin V. Universal joy reigned in Christendom, but none rejoiced more than Blessed John Dominic, who had labored so long and so zealously for this happy event. His joy was soon clouded by sorrow, for Gregory XII., his constant friend and benefactor, died the same year.

The prominent part taken by Blessed John Dominic in these great events and the wisdom and zeal exhibited by him gained him the esteem of all parties, and by many the peace of the Church and the end of the schism were attributed to his efforts. He received several votes for the Papacy in the Conclave when Martin V. was elected. "In addition to his well-known natural talents, which he had carefully cultivated to make them more useful to the Church," says Touron, "he possessed in an eminent degree every quality one could desire in a Pope; zeal, prudence, sweetness,

charity; and a firmness which matched the uprightness of his heart; an elevation of genius, and a justness of character which showed him in a moment the exact point of any question laid before him. Add to this long experience, and a natural eloquence difficult to resist, which made him master of souls so that he was able to persuade one of anything he wished. His disinterestedness appeared in the little care he took to enrich or elevate his relatives. The modesty of his household and the order that reigned in his dwelling was proof of his wisdom and piety. During the troubles in which he found himself after Gregory XII. honored him with the Roman purple he was never more given to prayer and penance, more rigid in his observance of the rules of his Order; nor in fine more attentive to his own advancement in perfection and sanctity." Truly a magnificent eulogium!

Martin V., the new Pope, placed full confidence in him, and when the Hussites rebelled in Bohemia sent him in 1418 as Legate in the interest of peace. The horrible cruelties of which the Hussites had been guilty made his

mission very difficult. They had massacred the secular clergy, the religious, and the magistrates; pillaged monasteries and burned churches. After a careful examination he came to the conclusion, already arrived at by the celebrated Gerson, that peace could not be restored by merciful means. From Bohemia he went into Hungary and rescued many Hussites in Buda-Pesth from their errors.

Soon after his arrival in that city he had a presentiment that his death was near, and began to prepare for it by purifying his soul by the tears of penance, and eagerly awaited his liberation from the evils of life. His presentiment was fulfilled, for he died, June 10, 1420, after having piously received all the sacraments of the Church. He was seventy years of age.

There being no Dominican monastery in Buda-Pesth he was buried in St. Paul's Church in the suburbs. Popular opinion gave him the title of Saint, and those who invoked his assistance were rewarded by many miraculous favors. He was solemnly beatified by Gregory XVI. His life was written by St. Antoninus, who had received the Dominican habit from his hands.

He was the author of several valuable works, some yet remaining in manuscript, the others having been frequently published. Among the latter are Commentaries on the Holy Scriptures, Sermons, a treatise on the Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, a life of Brother Marcolino who assisted in the martyrdom of St. Peter of Verona, but who repented and entered the Dominican Order, a rule of life, treatise on Charity, etc.

BLESSED STEPHEN BANDELLI.

BLESSED STEPHEN BANDELLI.

June 12.

1369–1450.

ALTHOUGH all that is now known about this holy man may be told in very few words, he merited the threefold aureola of doctor, preacher, and miracle worker.

He was born in the north of Italy, and sprang from a family held in great esteem. All the desires of his heart turned to God, and having learned to estimate the pleasures of this life at their true worth he sought to secure happiness in heaven by dedicating himself in the early dawn of life to the service of God in the Order of St. Dominic. He received the habit and made his religious profession in the monastery at Piacenza. In the Noviciate he was distinguished among the novices for his

spirit of prayer and love of penance, and was already regarded as a model of religious perfection. In his studies he no less excelled, and having passed though the course of ecclesiastical studies with great praise he became a Master of Theology and took his degree in Canon Law. His reputation for learning was so great that the faculty of the University of Pavia invited him to lecture in its halls. But it was as a preacher that he gained the greatest renown, and he was often compared with St. Paul. His sermons changed the hearts of countless sinners, and persuaded many to dedicate themselves to the service of God in the religious orders.

After a long life spent in apostolic labors, preaching and teaching, he died at Saluzzo, June 11th, 1450, and was buried in the church of the Order. The people who had loved and venerated him during life called him a saint after his death; and many miraculous favors were the reward of their prayers through his merits with God. An annual feast was kept in his honor at Saluzzo in gratitude to him for a signal benefit conferred on the town by the saint. In 1487 Saluzzo was attacked, but

when all seemed lost Blessed Stephen appeared in the heavens and the city was freed from its enemies. Blessed Stephen was beatified by Pope Pius IX.

BLESSED OSANNA.

BLESSED OSANNA,

OF THE THIRD ORDER

June 18.

1449–1505.

THE life of this holy daughter of St. Dominic was full of marvels, credible only to those who can sound the depths of the love of the Creator for the souls He has created.

She was born in Mantua, January 17th, 1449. God barely awaited the dawn of reason to attract her soul to Himself; when she was about six years old He caused a voice to speak to her that said unceasingly, "Life and death consist in loving God." Then an angel appeared to her and taking the child by the hand led her to the heavens, where he said: "Consider attentively all the works of God; raise your eyes and contemplate the Holy Trinity, unchangeable for ever. God created the

angels, but many were lost because they would not acknowledge Him as their Creator and refused to give Him the love of their hearts. Behold, my child, what he becomes who does not love God, and behold also to what sublime heights the love of God leads the soul." The angel then showed her the nine choirs of angels and the Court of the King of Glory, explaining everything, and impressing upon her mind that happiness is the fruit of true love. He showed her the galaxy of stars with their marvels and the earth beneath. "Listen," he said, "how every created thing proclaims with all its might that everything was made by God to gain for Him the love of men."

This vision made so powerful and lasting an impression on the mind of the little child that she asked God unceasingly to teach her how to love Him. "I persevered a long time," she said, "and at length the Lord appeared to me under the form of a child of ravishing beauty yet of admirable majesty. He smiled sweetly and charmed my soul, His golden hair floated around His head, but He wore His crown of thorns and carried on His shoulders a cross larger than Himself. As I gazed at Him He

said, 'Beloved daughter I, your Creator, the Son of the Virgin Mary, have always loved children because their hearts are pure, and I choose virgins for my betrothed. I guard their virginity and when they call me to their aid by the invocation, "Good Jesus," I hasten to assist them.'" From that time she had the words "Good Jesus" always on her lips, and her only desire was to possess Him. She dearly loved the Holy Name of Jesus and it always flooded her soul with joy.

The chosen of her heart visited her daily and conversed familiarly with her; usually under the form of a child, but sometimes He appeared to her on the cross, blood streaming from every pore of His sacred body, and the child early learned from Him to walk in the way of the cross. She had frequent ecstasies, and her parents often found her in some out of the way corner carried out of herself, incapable of answering their anxious inquiries. They thought she was afflicted with epilepsy and consulted a physician, which was the source of great pain and confusion to her.

She made a vow of virginity when she was seven years old, and began to go to confession

every week. When she was of sufficient age her father was desirous that she should enter the holy state of matrimony, but she put on the white habit of the Dominican Tertiaries as a sign that she belonged to God alone. She had to suffer much from him on this account, but divine assistance and sweet consolations were not wanting to her. She was fourteen years of age when she first put on the habit of our Order, which she wore until death, although her humility caused her to defer her profession until she was fifty-six years of age.

She felt the need of a holy and prudent confessor and prayed very earnestly that God would grant her one to direct her safely. When she was kneeling in supplication one day in the Dominican church she heard a voice say, "Take for your confessor the priest you now see offering the Holy Sacrifice," yet as the Father was very young she feared to be the victim of an illusion, and when the day came when she usually made her weekly confession she asked God to send her the priest He had chosen for her director. It was the same Father, Dominic de Crema, who although young was Novice Master, and who

was her confessor for many years and wrote her life.

After the death of her parents Osanna undertook the management of her home and fulfilled her duties to the satisfaction of all. Her soul was too firmly rooted in virtue to allow her new duties to draw her soul away from God, and she knew that to those who love God all things work together for good. By her holy example and pious exhortations she also led the servants of her household to fear God and serve Him by holiness of life. Mistress of the house she was free to exercise her charity towards the poor, and never were the needy turned away unrelieved from the door. Nothing was so sweet and consoling to her as this, and many were the times she deprived herself of food to give it away ; and when a famine broke out she never left the house without carrying some food with her to give to those she might meet. As if not to be excelled in generosity God miraculously increased her store of provisions, and when her larder was empty stocked it again.

She possessed wonderful powers of consoling the sad and afflicted, and it was commonly

said that no sooner was any grief confided to her than it vanished. Never was she heard to say an unkind word of any one. So many consulted her in their doubts and trials that she could with difficulty find time to take her meals. The citizens of Mantua regarded her as their oracle, and members of the reigning ducal family often visited her to seek her advice. Religious of every order consulted her on matters of conscience, and on one occasion having gone to visit a very devout family in Milan, she so charmed the large crowd that gathered together to see her, by her patience in listening to them and her prudence in resolving their doubts that they could scarcely tear themselves away from her.

It had always been her desire to be able to read so that she might learn about the saints of God's Church, but when her father in the spirit of the times declared it was not befitting a woman to read, she refrained from requesting him to allow her to be taught. One day she felt a great interior confidence that the sweet Mother of God would grant her desire, and a few days afterwards found that she could read, and as easily in Latin as in her

native tongue. She was also taught to write in the same marvelous manner. One of her letters full of quaint simplicity has been preserved.

A still more wonderful favor, the greatest one of her life, was now to be bestowed upon her: the spouse of her soul was to place His crown of thorns on her brow, and to pierce her hands and feet with the marks of His sacred Passion. She had endured with heroic patience for more than seven years sufferings almost inconceivable, yet not content she began to entreat her divine spouse to grant her the Sacred Stigmata. He seemed not to heed her desires for two long years, to inflame her heart with greater desire for that inestimable privilege. At length He gave her the crown of thorns in a vision, whereupon she fell fainting to the ground, and from that day she suffered continual headaches, and her friends often saw a circle of bleeding wounds around her head.

Encouraged by His loving condescension Osanna next entreated to bear the five wounds. One day she and Margaret Seraphine, a dear friend, were piously conversing on the words

of St. Paul, "I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ," when she was seized by an ecstasy, during which she piteously demanded our Lord to grant her His wound in her side, and protested that there would always be a void in her heart until He bestowed it upon her. For three hours she prayed thus, when on an instant a ray of light darted into her left side with such force that it caused her the most intense pain. Still she was not content, and from that day boldly asked for the other wounds, and after a year of fervent prayer and ardent longing our Lord became visible to her one day in the midst of dazzling radiance and said: "You desire to have my stigma?" and when she answered, "More than I can say," He continued, "The sufferings you desire are cruel and beyond your power to bear. It would be better for you to suffer moderately than to give way under severe torments." But she answered, "If you but come to my assistance no burden will be too heavy for me to bear. For long have I placed all my hopes in Thee, accomplish then what I desire."

Jesus assured her of his assistance, and immediately rays of light darted to her hands

and feet, causing her pain so intense that with a piteous cry she fell to the ground, and for a long time remained in an ecstatic state; her hands and feet were stigmatized as she desired; the wounds were always visible during Holy Week and on Wednesdays and Fridays, but at other times none but her own eyes could see them. This bleeding Bride of Christ suffered agonies of pain for love of God, yet never failed under the weight of the bitter cross she had placed on her own shoulders. Her sufferings were so severe that she well-nigh lost the power to sleep, fever consumed her strength, and the numerous ecstasies she fell into always left her physically exhausted. Those who were privileged to converse with her often noticed that she frequently stopped suddenly in the middle of a sentence, pressed her hands over her heart, and was obliged to wait a few moments before she could force herself to utter another word, as if the pain she felt deprived her of the power of speech. At all times she fled for consolation to the side of Jesus crucified, and His broken heart became for her a place of refuge where she always found peace. "I have indeed suffered much,"

she often said, "but never would I exchange the least torment I undergo for all that the world could give me."

When sickness hindered her from receiving Holy Communion she always made a spiritual communion, and more than once when she was not able to walk to church an angel carried her the Bread of Life. The tempter of souls made great efforts to discourage this grand soul, and to entrap her in his snares. "He often recalled to my mind my past faults," she said, "and suggested sins that I never committed. To remedy this I made a general confession which the Lord blessed, and a perfect peace took possession of my soul."

Her attachment and devotion to the Dominican Order, in which God had called her to serve Him, was very great. She was always to be found in the church of the Order, and by her prayers and good offices assisted the Fathers in their apostolic labors. When any Father took a journey she prayed for the grace to suffer in his stead any inconvenience he might meet with in his travels.

She was gifted with prophecy in a very remarkable degree, and worked many miracles.

About four years before she died it pleased God to make known to her the time of her death. "Before Pentecost," she said, "praying at daybreak I saw a religious of our Order appear to me. Her head was encircled with two shining crowns, and she was accompanied by a number of Bishops clad in pontifical vestments. They were in admirable order, and manifested extraordinary affection for this happy Virgin. She advanced towards me and with angelic sweetness said, 'Prepare yourself, my sister, for before long you will follow me and come to receive in eternal life the reward destined for you by your heavenly spouse.'" She spoke of this vision many times, and always lamented that she had no words adequate to describe the beauty of Blessed Columba of Rieti, who had thus come from heaven to visit her. She declared that Blessed Columba had twice appeared to her, when that saint was still in this mortal life, and that she now occupied in heaven a high rank, although not so elevated as that of the Seraphic St. Catharine of Siena.

When death came Osanna was willing to obey the summons, and after full compliance

with all the customs of the Church, she died in peace, surrounded by many of her spiritual children, June 18th, 1505. Her body was buried in the Dominican Church in Mantua, which she had loved so dearly and which had been for her the gate of heaven. Many miracles at her tomb attested her sanctity.

Innocent XII. gave permission to the Dominican Order to celebrate an annual feast in her honor to this day.

BLESSED MARK OF MODENA.

BLESSED MARK OF MODENA.

July 3.

1498.

THE historians of the Dominican Order have unhappily contented themselves with a mere outline of the life of this holy man, filling it in with a few bare details of his virtues, zeal for the salvation of souls, his piety and miracles.

He was a native of Modena. The difference between life and eternity which was forcibly imprinted on his mind in his early years, led him to resolve to devote his whole energies to secure the salvation of his soul. He felt attracted towards the Dominican Order, and having applied for admission was received as a novice in the monastery at Modena. Knowing that the principal end of the Dominican Order is the salvation of souls, he prepared

himself for his future labors by modeling his life on that of its holy founder, St. Dominic; observed the rules of the Order with the greatest fidelity as a preparation for the priesthood, and ardently devoted himself to study, in which he succeeded so well that he became one of the most learned and holiest in the community. Learning and sanctity so permeated his sermons when he began to preach that he drew large audiences, and never failed to convert sinners by every sermon. He also wrote several pious works much read and esteemed at the time.

He was elected Prior of Pesaro, where he was regarded as a saint both within and without his monastery. The account of one of his numerous miracles has been preserved. A boy of three or four years of age died. The broken-hearted mother immediately sent for Blessed Mark, who when he saw the dead child knelt down to pray, and then turning towards her said, "Your little one is in heaven. Do not wish him to return to life again, for you will lose him a second time when his loss will be a greater grief to you than it is now." But the sorrowing mother refused to listen,

and begged him to restore her child to her alive. He acceded to her request. After a second prayer he took the dead boy by the hand and said, "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, arise!" and the boy stood up quite well and strong. Ten years afterwards when he died a second time his words were fulfilled, for his mother's grief was greater than before.

After a life of missionary labors, the record of which is known to God alone, Blessed Mark died a holy death, holding in his hands the sign of man's redemption, September 21st, 1498. He was buried among the Fathers, but his body was afterwards removed to the Rosary Chapel and reinterred under the altar. Many miracles accompanied this translation, a sweet perfume filled the church, and the bells in the tower were rung by invisible hands. His relics were annually exposed for the veneration of the faithful, on the Monday in Whitweek, and lamps burned before his tomb day and night.

This cultus having continued it was approved by Pope Pius IX., who granted permission to the Dominican Order and to the Diocese of

Modena to celebrate a feast in his honor every year. It is observed in the Dominican Order on this day.

BLESSED JAMES A VORAGINE.

BLESSED JAMES A VORAGINE.

July 13.

1230–1298.

On the Genoese coast, six miles from Savona, is a small town called in ancient times Vicus Virginis, and Varazze in our own days. The holy and learned Bishop whose life we now lay before our readers, was born in the year 1230 in that little town. Neither the name of his family nor their social standing is known.

We learn from himself that he received the Dominican habit in St. Dominic's Monastery in Genoa, in the year 1244, being only fourteen years of age. As a novice he courageously bore all the austerities of the Order: penance and mortification were congenial to him, he loved the retirement of the monastic life, and gave himself to prayer and medita-

tion; and when it came to the time for him to commence his ecclesiastical studies, he threw himself into them with holy enthusiasm. By these means he preserved his innocence and rendered himself fit for the work of a Friar Preacher, the salvation of souls.

Having gained a profound knowledge of theology by his diligent application and the purity of his intention, he was instituted a Lector, or Lecturer, on Theology. Like all the learned men of the Dominican Order of those times, he was especially noted for his lectures on the Holy Scriptures, and for his ingenious and lucid explanations of the most difficult passages. The students who thronged to his lectures were deeply impressed by his genuine piety, the solidity of his doctrine, and the elegance and purity of his style. He translated the Holy Scriptures into Italian, and is said to have been the first to have done so. When he preached, his pathetic eloquence seconded by his saintly life, worked powerfully on the hearts of his audience; sinners became virtuous, and the virtuous became saints. He evangelized the whole of the north of Italy.

After having filled the office of Prior he was

elected, 1267, Provincial of Lombardy, being only thirty-seven years of age. Much surprise was manifested that so young a man should have been chosen for that important office, it having been the custom hitherto to select Fathers of experience and advanced age; but the wisdom of the choice was proved by his prudence and zeal, which soon gained him golden opinoins. He maintained perfect observance and regularity in all the communities, and the province prospered much under his care. He retained this office until he was released from it by the General Chapter of Paris, 1286, having held it nineteen years.

In 1288 he was commissioned by Pope Honorius IV. to absolve the citizens of Genoa from the interdict under which they had fallen by assisting the Sicilians in their revolt against the King.

After the death of the Archbishop of Genoa the Canons chose four names, among whom was that of Blessed James, for his successor. All four having declined, the care of the Diocese was committed to the Patriarch of Antioch, who had been driven from his See by the Saracens. When he died, in 1292, the

Canons unanimously elected Blessed James, and he was commanded by the Pope to accept the office, and to go to Rome to receive episcopal consecration from his own hands. The Pope, however, died a few weeks afterwards, and he was consecrated by Cardinal Orsini, Dean of the Sacred College, April 13th, 1292.

He received a magnificent welcome on his entrance into Genoa, and began the administration of his Diocese amid universal rejoicing. His first care was to restore peace among the citizens. The quarrels between the Guelphs and Ghibelines had involved the city in civil war for fifty years, and had been the cause of endless evils. Although Blessed James knew that several of his predecessors in the archiepiscopal See had vainly endeavored to effect a reconciliation between the rival factions, he saw that all his efforts for the good of religion would be useless unless these enmities ceased. By patience, prudence, and more than all, by kind services rendered to both parties when occasion offered, he gained the confidence of all, and at length brought about a reconciliation.

In his chronicle of the city of Genoa he

says: "In the year 1295 a general and universal peace was made in the city of Genoa; all were brought to peace and concord by the grace of the Saviour, so that one society, one brotherhood was formed. From which ensued such joy that the whole city was full of jubilation, merry-making and immense joy. We also, in the public assembly in which peace was sworn, preached the word in full pontificals, and then with our clergy sang the 'Te Deum,' having with us four Bishops and mitred Abbots."

For eleven months the city was at peace, a state of affairs strange to the young who had grown up amid the sound and din of arms, but sweet to the old, to whom it recalled the happier and more peaceful days of their youth. "But," as continues the holy Bishop's chronicle, "no good thing is perfectly possible in this life; our joy was soon turned to grief. For in December of the same year, five days after the Nativity of our Lord, the enemy of the human race turned the peace into discord and troubles, in the streets and squares, and there were hand to hand fights for many days; from which followed the death and wounding

of many, the burning of houses, spoliation of goods, and rapine. And because fury was not controlled by reason the uproar so increased that in order to get possession of the tower of St. Lawrence's church, some dared to set fire to the church so that its roof was completely destroyed. This dangerous sedition lasted until the seventh of January."

During this turmoil the excitement was so great that no one would listen to the Archbishop when he spoke of peace; but God heard his prayers, and those who loved Him. Several dangerous agitators were deprived of all voice in the direction of public affairs, and peace was again restored. But the effects of these riots were very grave; churches, monasteries and all the charitable institutions had suffered. Families hitherto opulent were now destitute, orphans and widows were left without support. Like an angel of charity the Archbishop took charge of everything. He devoted the whole revenues of his See for the relief of those in need, clothed the naked, housed the homeless, seasoning his charity with good advice, tender sympathy and kind and loving words. He sold the furniture of

his palace when his funds were exhausted and then persuaded the wealthy to aid him in the good work.

But the damage to property was a small evil in comparison with the evil moral effects of the civil war. The sacraments were neglected, and piety had well-nigh vanished. The clergy had also suffered, for instead of giving good example many of them were a scandal to the people. On entering upon his archiepiscopal duties Blessed James had begun to reform the clergy. He made visitations, and became acquainted with the state and needs of every parish in the diocese. In 1293 he held a Provincial Council, in which many salutary regulations were made, which proved to be most useful for the lasting good of religion; so that when he wrote the "Chronicle of the City of Genoa" he rejoiced for the diocesan statutes made in this synod.

After governing his Diocese for six years, during which he set an example of piety and hard work, he died, respected and beloved by all, July, 1298, in the sixty-ninth year of his age. He was buried under the high altar in the Dominican church. His relics were sol-

emnly translated in 1885 to the church of Santa Maria di Castello in Genoa, and placed under the high altar. He was beatified by Pius VII.

Blessed James has a world-wide reputation as an author. Echard, in his ponderous volumes on the writers of the Dominican Order, mentions the following: Several volumes of sermons, a translation of the Holy Scriptures into Italian, a collection of the histories contained in the Bible, a book on the writings of Saint Augustine, an abridgment of "The Sum of the Virtues and Vices," originally written by a celebrated Dominican author, William Perault, a work in praise of the Blessed Virgin, a treatise on moral theology for the use of the clergy of his Diocese, a chronicle of the city of Genoa to the year 1295, a defence of the Dominican Order, a history of Lombardy, the acts of the Provincial Council of Genoa held in 1293, and lastly the famous "Lives of the Saints," called in after times the "Golden Legends," one of the famous books of the world. It consists of a collection of the lives of the saints taken from various sources, but arranged in new order. The name of legend given

it is misleading: the word must be taken in its true meaning, "to be read," or as we say now, "Readings." It has been translated into almost every European language, and for two hundred years was more widely read than any book except the Holy Scriptures. Its great popularity in the Middle Ages was due to the fact that it suited the popular taste of the times, and also because it was written in a pleasing style. Judged by the literary acumen of later ages the "Golden Legends" was a mixture of fables and truth.

As it contained so much beauty the Master General of the Dominican Order commissioned the famous Dominican author, Bernard Gui, to rearrange it, by weeding out the false and retaining the true; but such was the charm of the original work that it continued to enjoy the popular favor. Over-estimated at its appearance, it was severely criticized in later times. Its faults were the faults of the period in which it was written, and should not be charged to its author. This is the verdict of Fleury, who says: "We should not accuse its author for its faults, but the bad taste of his age, in which nothing but the marvelous was

sought after. He did not originate its faults, they can be perceived in authors, (Vincent of Beauvais for example,) who preceded him. He has added embellishments, circumstances, and conversations likely to have taken place, which he thought would edify the readers, and he has done this with great talent."

BLESSED CESLAS.

BLESSED CESLAS.

July 18.

1184–1242.

ALL the ancient historians of Poland and Bohemia speak of the exalted virtues and remarkable life of Blessed Ceslas. Yet it is now impossible to obtain any sufficient account of his life and apostolic labors; for although a manuscript life of this great servant of God was preserved for many centuries in the Dominican monastery at Breslau, the Lutherans burned it in the hope of consigning his memory to oblivion. All that we are now able to learn of his life was carefully gathered together by several authors in the sixteenth century, from the life of his brother, St. Hyacinth, some fragments of the original manuscript saved from the fire, and from manuscripts in the monastery church of St. Adelbert in Breslau, where

the saint's tomb, and some ancient pictures representing the principal events of his life may yet be seen.

He was born in the year 1184, a year after St. Hyacinth. Springing from so noble and Catholic a family as the Odrowatz, and having an uncle such as Ivo de Konski, we cannot wonder that he grew up in holiness. As students, he and his brother Hyacinth, says Bzovius, "were called the Two Sages, for they showed such serious application to study, that in comparison with them the other scholars seemed like mere shadows." A lover of solitude, prayer, and study, Ceslas was regarded even in youth as a saint. He was so modest that none of the students dared make the slightest improper allusions in his presence, and when any one desired to cite an example of chastity Ceslas at once came to his mind. We may suppose that he accompanied his brother Hyacinth when he went to study at Prague and Bologna.

When the time came for him to choose his state of life he made a spiritual retreat, and feeling divinely called to the priesthood, was ordained. He was nominated Canon of

Cracow and Provost of Sandomir by his uncle the Bishop. In those offices he was distinguished by his charity towards the poor. Bzovius calls him the ornament of the Church in Poland.

St. Hyacinth and Blessed Ceslas went to Rome with the Bishop of Cracow, where they entered the Dominican Order, receiving the habit from the hands of St. Dominic; and as says the lesson of his office in the Dominican Breviary, "in the fertile fields of religion no one surpassed him in the depth of his knowledge and in the holiness of his life; no one labored more than he to plant and spread the new order and at the same time the truths of the Christian religion." The brothers, with Herman the Teuton and Henry the Moravian, after having made their vows to St. Dominic, returned to Poland; Herman was left at Freisach to rule the monastery founded there by St. Hyacinth. Blessed Ceslas contributed much towards these important foundations by his eloquent sermons and personal influence.

As soon as the community founded at Cracow was put on a firm footing, St. Hyacinth

sent Ceslas into Bohemia to found the Order in that ancient kingdom.

The Bishop of Prague gave him a very kind reception, and knowing that the King intended to endow a monastery, recommended him to bestow it on the Dominican Order. Aided by Father Henry the Moravian and another named Jerome, Ceslas at once began to form a community. When he preached the whole city was captivated; every day a new novice arrived, and in a very short time the monastery contained a hundred and twenty-six Friars, so that in five years it became imperative to seek a site for a larger building. King Premislas donated the Church of St. Clement, and made many presents of gold, pearls and other precious stones, for the service of the altar. The Bishop of Prague having died his successor was no less friendly to the Order, and when he resigned his See took the Dominican habit. His example was soon followed by several members of the Cathedral Chapter. One of them, Adrien, by name, was sent several years afterwards by Ceslas to preach the faith in Bosnia, where he and twenty-six other Dominicans were martyred by the Turks.

Several ladies desiring to lead a more perfect life than they could in the bosom of their families, offered themselves to the Order and formed a large community of Dominican nuns. They built a convent in Prague which became famous, and counted among its inmates many ladies of noble birth and royal rank. Among the latter was Queen Margaret, widow of Henry, King of the Romans, who entered the convent as a lay sister in 1260.

Blessed Ceslas, whose attraction was always for the active life of a missionary, resigned the government of the Monastery of Prague into the hands of Father Henry the Moravian, and set out to establish the Order in Silesia, his native land. When he arrived in Breslau the Bishop gave him the Church of Saint Adalbert, and assisted him to build a monastery. Breslau became the centre of Ceslas's apostolic labors. He preached from city to city in Silesia, Poland, Bohemia, Moravia, Saxony, Pomerania, and Prussia; in a word throughout the whole country between the Elbe and the Baltic sea. The half-civilized people became willing captives to his eloquence. He went on foot, practising the penance he

preached, restoring sinners to God, rooting out vice and superstition, gathering the elect of God into the Order, and founding monasteries in nearly every large city. The savage people, who seemed hitherto to have lived but to war upon others, changed their fierce dispositions into piety, and learned to sanctify bravery by Christian virtue. One of the souls he especially loved and who placed herself under his spiritual direction was St. Hedwige, wife of Henry, King of Poland. After the birth of several children the King and Queen agreed to live a life of chastity. Ceslas predicted to the King that a fearful invasion of the Tartars would soon take place, and warned him that God was about to inflict a terrible punishment on the people, recommending him to fast and pray, to turn away the divine anger from his kingdom.

Like many of God's missionary saints Ceslas worked many miracles. Bzovius assures us that he often chased the devil from the bodies of the possessed, restored health to the sick and dying, gave speech to the dumb, hearing to the deaf and sight to the blind, and that he raised four dead men to life. One day he

started off on a missionary expedition, but found his journey arrested by the river Oder. Fully as confident in divine providence as was St. Hyacinth on a similar occasion, he had recourse to the same assistance, and began to pray. "The divine Saviour," he said, "when He went to seek lost sinners, beheld the sea become solid beneath His feet. My heart is full of the same desire for their salvation. Why then cannot this river do the same service for me?" and like St. Hyacinth he laid his cappa, or monastic cloak, on the water and walked over safely to the other side.

The body of the only son of a lady named Wratislava, who had been drowned in the same river, was found at the end of a week in a state of decomposition. Taken by the sorrowing mother to Blessed Ceslas, her tears pleaded in her behalf. He gazed for a moment towards heaven, and at once the cold and livid corpse regained the warmth and flush of life.

In 1241 took place the invasion of Tartars predicted by him fourteen years before. That savage and untamable race inhabited an immense tract of country in Asia, and for long

had been the terror of the east of Europe by their frequent invasions. In 1241 they divided their army, one part attacking the Chinese empire, which they completely overrun, while the other, numbering five hundred thousand, turned to the west, and after having conquered the south of Russia, Bulgaria, Poland, and Hungary, pushed their conquests as far as Germany.

The King of Poland, the husband of St. Hedwige, was killed in battle, and the Tartars came to Silesia. They desolated the land through which they passed, burned every city they conquered, and left the fields strewn with the bodies of the slain. No power seemed able to resist them or soften their cruelty. After profaning the churches with shameful crimes they set them on fire; broke the sacred vessels and dragged the bodies of the saints from their tombs. Quarter was given to none, neither age nor rank was spared. After ravishing the women they slew them on the spot, and murdered children on their mother's breasts. When they came near Breslau Ceslas preached penance, and bade the people pray that God might have mercy upon them and

deliver them from such fearful enemies. The great wealth of the city, which was the largest and most flourishing in Silesia, inflamed the Tartars' cupidity, and it was not long before the terrified citizens saw them encamped before the walls. The nobles and the most opulent of the inhabitants retired into the citadel, carrying their treasures with them, burning all they were forced to leave behind.

The Tartars quickly forced an entrance into Breslau, slaying all they met. The heaps of ashes and burning houses filled them with fury, for they had hoped to obtain a rich booty. When they attacked the citadel there could be no earthly doubt of their ultimate success, and the hearts of the brave defenders were filled with dismay. But the hour they thought was their last was that of their glorious deliverance. Ceslas was in the citadel; he had said Mass that morning, and just as the Tartars were placing their scaling ladders against the walls he appeared on the battlements, crucifix in hand. Then, like another Moses, he raised his hands in prayer, and there came from heaven a large globe of fire, which falling in the enemy's ranks, destroyed them with its flames.

Fear seized the Tartars; they fled and abandoned the siege. The redoubtable army that had conquered nations and overturned thrones was routed by the hand of God at the prayer of Ceslas, His humble servant. Breslau was saved.

This miracle was attested by those Tartars who were taken prisoners, and was recorded in the ancient annals of the Dominican Monastery at Breslau, which, as Touron assures us, were still in existence at the time he wrote. It is also mentioned by several historians, even by a Lutheran, who, however, suppresses Blessed Ceslas's name. Those Tartars who were taken prisoners were so deeply impressed by it that they became Christians. One of these converts, a King called Procrus, entered the Dominican Order, and rendered invaluable assistance in converting the infidels.

This was the brilliant sunset of a glorious life. Ceslas was seized by sickness in the following summer, and it soon became evident that the time of his death was drawing near. When dying he lovingly addressed the Fathers and Brothers, and like one of the patriarchs of old, exhorted them to love and serve their

Creator. He bade them place all their confidence in the merits of Christ; exhorted them never to forget that no one can be a perfect religious unless he first be a perfect Christian; and assured them that the customs and observances of the monastic life are holy and pleasing to God only inasmuch as they spring from true humility and renunciation of oneself and of the world.

When the hour of his death came he took a crucifix in his hand, and with all the ardor of his soul, said: "Lord, it is Thee I desire, deign to admit me to Thy divine embrace," and died, July 16, 1242. He was fifty-eight years of age.

Illustrious in life by miracles, he was no less so after death. Twice was the monastery he had built in Breslau saved from destruction by his intercession, the city was saved from invasions and floods, the sick were cured when all hope had fled, and graces innumerable of body and soul were obtained by the devout invocation of his venerated name. His body was translated in 1608 and enshrined in a magnificent chapel erected by the Bishop of Breslau. During the ceremonies it is said that a

statue of the Blessed Virgin inclined its head as the holy body was carried past, and that the figures of the angels that surrounded it trembled as if with joy.

Blessed Ceslas was beatified in 1713 by Clement XI.

BLESSED JOANNA OF ORVIETO.

BLESSED JOANNA OF ORVIETO,

OF THE THIRD ORDER.

July 23.

1264–1306.

THIS holy Tertiary was born in the year 1264 at Carnajola, near Orvieto in Umbria. The cottage in which she was born still exists, and bears this inscription over the door: "In this house was born Blessed Joanna of Carnajola. She died at Orvieto, July 23rd, 1306, aged 42 years."

When she was only three years old her father died and her mother followed him into eternity two years later. One day some of her little companions mocked at her and said, "You have no mother, you are an abandoned child." She did not answer by words, but took them into the church, and pointing to a picture of the holy angel guardian, said, "He

will be father and mother to me;" a remarkable sentiment in so young a child. Her confidence was soon rewarded, for charitable friends took upon themselves to provide for her support. Coming to the age of discretion, she conceived a great love for the state of virginity, and made it the object of all her prayers.

Having been told that idleness is a snare for virtue, she learned dressmaking. One evening on her way home from her teacher a young libertine spoke some light words in her ear. She took flight, praying God to come to her assistance and preserve her innocence. Her prayer was heard in a terrible manner, for the young man died only a few hours afterwards. The next day she took another street, but again was insulted by another young man. A few days afterwards death claimed him also. This fearful experience made her resolve to defend her virtue by some public declaration of her intention of dedicating it to God, and divine Providence suggested to her to enter the Third Order of St. Dominic. This intention was warmly opposed by her friends, who had already found

a husband for her in the person of a young man of honorable character and of good position. Joanna humbly excused herself by pleading her consecration to God.

After many contentions and long delays she took refuge in the house of a bosom friend who dwelt in the country, where she practised severe fasts and undertook many very hard penances. The happiness she so earnestly prayed for and so confidently expected was promised her in an ecstasy, during which she was assured that the habit of the Third Order would soon be granted to her, which soon came to pass.

After her admission into the Third Order Joanna set herself to acquire the virtues required by so holy a state, and soon became remarkable for her contempt of pleasure, her perfect chastity, her sweet humility, patience and obedience, and distinguished by her charity towards the poor. She devoted every morning to prayer, and sometimes part of the afternoon. During prayer the excess of her love for God often forced heavy perspiration from her body, and it was with difficulty that she could bear any clothing even in the depth

of winter. When any one spoke to her of the love of God, of the Mother of Christ, the sufferings of the martyrs or of any such subjects she immediately fell into an ecstatic state, during which her soul was inundated with heavenly delights. While in these ecstasies her impressions were expressed by her actions; thus on the feast of the holy Apostles Sts. Peter and Paul, she was seen in ecstasy with her arms outstretched as if fastened to a cross. Then she bent her head towards the ground like St. Paul when he offered his head to the executioners. Hearing the account of the martyrdom of St. Catharine of Alexandria she fell into ecstasy, and was heard to exclaim, "Arise, O Blessed Catharine," when she herself was drawn up from the ground and remained for some time suspended in the air. A Dominican Father who visited her on the feast of the Assumption, spoke of the mystery of the day; to whom she listened with such attention and joy that all at once he saw her rise in the air until she reached three feet from the ground, where she remained stationary, her eyes turned upwards, and her hands outstretched, a living image of the Blessed Vir-

gin carried by angels into heaven. After remaining some time in that position she slowly descended to the ground. But no mystery touched her so deeply as the Passion of our Divine Lord. On Good Friday, while calling His sufferings and death to her mind, she became so absorbed that her body stiffened, her arms extended themselves, her feet crossed one over the other as if she was crucified, and her bones were heard to crack violently, and she remained in agony from noon until evening. This extraordinary ecstasy took place every Good Friday for the last nine years of her life except once when she was sick with fever. On Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday her ecstasies were joyous beyond description, for He who shared with her His sorrows granted her a participation in his Easter joys.

Fed on heavenly sweets it was no wonder that Joanna had little relish for earthly nourishment. "Will not food cause pain to those who have no appetite for it?" she often asked of those who urged her to eat. Yet the less food she took the more her strength increased; her complexion was always good and her appearance more like that of those who enjoy

the pleasures of the table than that of those who fast. One night when suffering from severe pain she was miraculously given to drink a cup of wine, which cured her as soon as she drank it. Sister Chisilia, the Prioress of the Third Order, was very anxious to know how she had been cured so suddenly. Joanna said: "I saw my little room filled with bright light, and in the midst there appeared a golden cross on which hung Jesus, the true light of the world, and I was given some wine to drink so sweet that it surpassed in flavor the most exquisite wine the world can give."

One Christmas eve she was so sick that she was not able to go to church; but while she was lamenting this misfortune she was suddenly surrounded by light, and from the heart of its radiance there came a Host, which flew to her mouth and descended into her breast. Another time when hindered by sickness from going to church to receive Holy Communion, the Blessed Virgin bearing Jesus in her arms became visible to her. "Joanna," said the Divine child, "you cannot go to church to receive me to-day in Holy Communion, but you always possess me in your heart by my

grace," and at these consoling words her sorrow was changed into joy.

She was frequently enveloped by light as she prayed, and when one of her intimate friends asked "What fire is this?" she answered, "Does not the holy prophet say that God is a consuming fire?" After prayer she seemed like another Moses descending from the mountain, for her face was all aflame and none who saw her could doubt but that she had been very near the furnace of divine love.

Fearing the snare of vainglory she concealed as far as possible the wonderful graces God showered upon her, and for many years succeeded; but when they became common talk she said to Sister Chisilia, "I beseech you on your conscience that when you see me receive any extraordinary favors from God you will not allow any one to enter the room," and when the Sister answered, "I am your Prioress and will do what seems best to me," she insisted and said, "I repeat what I have just said." She always spoke of herself as a miserable sinner, the most wicked woman in the world, and often called herself an incarnate demon. Several ladies once came from a dis-

tance to obtain her blessing. When she learned the object of their visit she indignantly said, "What are you thinking of? It is not a saint whose blessing you desire but an incarnate devil!" To do her any injury was a service done to her; so that it became a common saying in Orvieto that to obtain a share in her prayers and merits it was only necessary to insult her, or to do her an injury.

Her patience was perfected by countless trials. For six years she was so sick that she was forced to keep her room for months at a time, but never was she heard to utter any word of complaint. She did not escape persecution from the spirit of evil, who attempted to distract her mind when she prayed, by appearing to her under different shapes; but all to no purpose, for she continued her exercises with greater assiduity and his temptations served only to increase her merits.

When the term of her mortal life drew near God revealed to her that she was about to die. At the end of an ecstasy more prolonged than usual, she said to Sister Chisilia: "I am about to die, dear mother." "What do you say?" sadly answered the Prioress. "Yes,"

insisted Joanna, "I am most certainly about to die"; and from that moment her health began to fail. She prepared for her passage to eternity by devoutly receiving the last sacraments, and died July 23, 1306. She had reached the age of forty-two, having spent twenty-two in the Third Order. An exquisite perfume was perceived at the moment of her death, which to one seemed like the aroma of lilies, to others it suggested the scent of violets, and some declared it was like a mixture of sweet-smelling herbs. Thus did God testify to her many virtues, her virginal purity being represented by the scent of the lily, her humility by the perfume of the violet, and her other virtues by the fragrance of aromatic herbs. She was buried in the Third Order cemetery, in Orvieto near the Church of St. Dominic.

Many pious persons had visions of her heavenly reward, and miracles declared her sanctity. Her body was translated in 1307 to the Chapel of the Three Kings. From the head exuded a liquor as sweet as balm to the smell, and blood flowed from her left side as if her Divine Spouse, whose sufferings she imitated during life, had bestowed on her a wound of love

after death. In 1743, when the process of her beatification had been commenced, her relics were enshrined in a costly reliquary, in which they remain to this day.

Blessed Joanna was beatified by Benedict XIV., Nov. 28th, 1754.

BLESSED AUGUSTINE FANGI OF BIELLA.

BLESSED AUGUSTINE FANGI OF BIELLA.

July 27.

1493.

BLESSED AUGUSTINE was born in the early part of the fifteenth century, at Biella, a small city in Piedmont. His father was a scion of the noble family of Fangi.

When Augustine was quite young, Amadeus, Duke of Savoy, built a monastery of the Dominican Order in Biella, and it was within its walls that the young man consecrated his life and talents to the service of God. He set himself so earnestly to imitate the virtues, and more especially the penances of St. Dominic, that in a few years he had gained for himself the reputation of being a master in the science of the saints. His fasts were long and severe, and his fervor in prayer was so great that he

was often seen raised from the ground, remaining suspended in the air. This happened frequently during the recitation of the divine office and when celebrating Holy Mass.

He was distinguished by his devotion to the holy Mother of God, and throughout life was an indefatigable apostle of the Rosary. Consequently his sermons were productive of great and lasting good, and led to the conversion of sinners in great numbers. The gift of miracles, divinely bestowed on him, also contributed much to this happy result. Several of these miracles are recorded; we will mention two only, which reveal to us his tender heart and his love for little children. Walking out one day he came across a boy sobbing as if his heart would break. He soon found out the cause of the boy's grief. It was a simple matter but one of great moment to the child. He had been carrying some wine in an earthen jar and carelessly letting it fall had broken the jar into fragments and spilled the wine. Augustine's tender heart was filled with pity. He picked up the fragments, and having fitted them together, restored the vessel full of wine to the open-eyed and astonished child. A

newly born child having died at Soncino without baptism he restored it to life.

So universal was the opinion of his sanctity that his prayers were eagerly sought for by the people; and his fellow Dominicans continually demanded him for their Superior. Whenever he could be induced to accept that dignity he maintained perfection of discipline, and worthily performed all the duties of his office, but his desire was to escape from honors and to remain unknown. At length he obtained permission to retire to the monastery of St. Dominic in Venice, where he died, July 22nd, 1493. His last words were, "Blessed be God, glory be to the most High." The whole city attended his funeral, and crowds went to pray at his tomb; lamps were lighted there and the number of ex-voto offerings testified to the popular opinion of his sanctity. Four years after his death his body was found incorrupt, although it had been buried in a very damp grave. It was placed in a marble tomb in the chapel of St. Mary Magdalen, afterwards rededicated to the honor of St. Pius the Fifth.

In 1807 the church and monastery of St.

Dominic were destroyed to make a public garden, at which time a pious priest carried away the holy body, which was deposited in the year 1825 in the Church of the Minor Conventuals. His relics now repose in the Church of St. Dominic in Venice, rebuilt in 1843, the Patriarch of Venice having restored them to the Order at the time of his beatification in 1872.

BLESSED ANTONY DELLA CHIESA.

BLESSED ANTONY DELLA CHIESA.

July 28.

1395–1459.

Blessed Antony, the son of the Marquis della Chiesa, was born in the year 1395, at San Germano, near Vercelli.

As a boy he was sincerely pious and divided his time between visits to the church and study. Coming to the age when it became his duty to choose a state in life, he desired to dedicate himself to the service of God in the Dominican Order; but his father, who hoped that his talented son would become an honor to his family, had far other plans for his future, and resolutely opposed his desires. The young man obeyed his father's wishes and confidently awaited the time when God would overcome opposition. His patience and obedience were finally rewarded, for when he

was twenty-two years of age, with his father's consent, he received the habit of our Order in the monastery of Vercelli, where he soon attained to a high degree of sanctity by the perfect practice of every Christian virtue. Humility, self-denial, chastity, penance and prayer went hand in hand with study to form a grand and glorious character, so that he became a living model to all in the community, and a Dominican after St. Dominic's heart.

The long and thorough course of studies required by the Dominican constitutions having been successfully passed through, he was ordained priest, and was at once sought after as a director of souls and a preacher of the word of God. He accomplished these delicate duties with great prudence, sweetness and success; and it was in their exercise that his whole life was spent. For several years he was the companion of St. Bernardine of Siena, sharing in his apostolic labors and partaking of his success. In the city of Como his missions produced such an effect that those who had been a scandal to the city began under his direction to live regular and edifying lives.

He was elected Prior of Como, Savona,

Florence, and Bologna respectively, although his humility caused him to think himself unfit for such an office. When the end of his office came he thanked God who had relieved him of such a heavy burden, but when he was again elected he wept, and for some time seemed inconsolable.

He was remarkable for many supernatural gifts, and was permitted by God to utter prophecies, to see hidden things, and to read the secrets of hearts. The gift of miracles was abundantly bestowed upon him; he cured the sick and gave speech to the dumb. His devotion to the Blessed Virgin was so ardent that she often visited him during his ecstasies, when her presence filled his cell with miraculous light, and his face shone with the reflection of heavenly glory.

His biographers record the following wonderful and instructive event that happened to him when he was Prior of Savona. Praying in the dark and silent church one night after Matins, he heard the sound of many horses cantering past the church, and wondering what could be taking place, opened the door and saw a company of cavaliers riding past.

He approached the cavalcade and asked who they were, but received no answer. Thinking that they were perhaps foreign troops who did not speak Italian he repeated his question in Latin; silence was the only response. Then he began to suspect something supernatural, and raising his voice he addressed them again and said: "In the name of Jesus Christ, Lord of heaven and earth, I command you to tell me what you are and whither you are going." He who seemed to be their chief answered at once, and said that they were devils going to the deathbed of a certain usurer to conduct his soul to hell. The holy man, whose heart was at once filled with great pity for the dying man, said, "I will go and pray, so that if there is yet time this dying man may save his soul." The devils laughed and mockingly said, "You can pray as long as you please, your prayers will be useless, the sentence is already pronounced." "At the least," said the Father, "return this way that I may learn the result," to which request they agreed, and rode on their way. Father Antony immediately returned to the church, and prayed before the altar for the salvation of

the dying man. A quarter of an hour passed away and again he heard the sound of the horses' hoofs, and ran in haste to the church door, where he saw the devils carrying away the usurer, body and soul, to eternal doom. The next morning messengers from the dead man's family arrived to request the Prior to come to the house, to comfort his family in their bereavement. When he arrived there the children asked if the funeral could take place from the monastery church, and if he would preach on the occasion. He answered that he would willingly do so on condition that he was allowed to see the body. They evaded his request, and then he said, "I know why you refused. Last night, I saw your unfortunate father carried away by demons. Learn not to imitate his criminal conduct, make restitution of all he unlawfully acquired, and give alms to the poor to secure the salvation of your own souls," and then he returned to the monastery, where he narrated what had taken place, and exhorted the Fathers to preach manfully against the fearful crime of usury, which caused the loss of so many souls.

Blessed Antony passed his last years in the

monastery of Como, where he died, January 22nd, 1459, and was buried in the Dominican church. The voice of the people declared him a saint, and their judgment was confirmed by miracles. Relics of his habit restored health to the sick, and on three different occasions a piece of his cappa on being cast into fire came out unconsumed.

In 1810 his relics were transferred to the Dominican church at San Germano, his native place. His cultus was confirmed by Pius VII., who placed his feast on July 28th, the date of the translation of his relics.

BLESSED MANNES.

BLESSED MANNES.

July 30.

13TH CENTURY.

LITTLE is known of the life of Mannes de Guzman; a brief mention in the life of his more illustrious brother St. Dominic, and a few short notices in the early chronicles of the Dominican Order are all that has been preserved to us. A cultus has however existed since his death, and the Church has declared him blessed.

Speaking of St. Dominic in the "Vitæ Fratrum," Gerard de Frachet says: "As proof of the perfection of his life and as a sign of his sanctity, we say at the outset, that not only had he honest and pious parents, but he had also two very perfect brothers, who are said to have shone by miracles during life and after death. One of them was a secular priest,

giving himself to works of mercy and consecrating himself entirely to the service of the poor in an hospital; the other was called Brother Mannes, a man of contemplation, serving God a long time in the Order."

Blessed Mannes was born at Calareuga, in Spain, about the middle of the twelfth century. The child of such parents as Blessed Jane of Aza and Felix de Guzman, it is no wonder that he was a holy youth. Called by God to the ecclesiastical state, he became remarkable for his piety and love of prayer, reaching lofty heights of contemplation. The love of God that found a home in his heart overflowed in apostolic zeal, and it is mentioned that he preached very frequently.

When his younger brother, St. Dominic, began his apostolic labors in Languedoc in 1207, Mannes joined him, sharing the fatigues and dangers of that difficult enterprise. He remained with St. Dominic engaged in this work more than ten years, and when his brother founded an order devoted to preaching, Mannes was one of the sixteen who were the first to receive the habit at Prouille, on the Feast of the Assumption, 1216. He was

sent soon afterwards with Brother Matthew to establish the Order in Paris, where he soon became well known and widely esteemed. His preaching attracted so many to the Order, and his influence became so great, that he was looked upon as the founder of the monastery of St. Jacques in Paris. How long he remained there is uncertain, but we learn that he was chaplain to a convent of Dominican Sisters in Madrid, and remained twelve years in that capacity. Going to Calareuga to preach, he was taken sick, and died there about the year 1233. Gerard de Frachet says, "He died in a certain monastery of white monks in Spain, where he shone by virtues and miracles, having a venerated tomb near the altar." This monastery of white monks was the Cistercien Abbey of St. Peter in Gumiel d'Yzar, near Calareuga. Mention was made of his relics by a Spanish Dominican in the General Chapter of the Order held in 1304.

As he was always regarded as a saint, Pope Gregory XVI. approved the immemorial cultus paid to him, and granted permission to the Dominican Order to celebrate Mass and the office on this day in his honor.

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